

ROLLING STONE

**DETROIT'S
MC5:**

ACME

No. 25

JANUARY 4, 1969

UK: 3/6 35 CENTS

'Kick Out the Jams!'

Traffic Breaks Up; Winwood to Play With Clapton?

**Jann Wenner:
Our Man in Las Vegas**

**Jon Landau on
Beggar's Banquet**

Plus:

Jose Feliciano

Taj Mahal

**Hell's Angels
for
Christmas**

Godard

**Gleason on
Longhair**

**Janis Joplin's
New Band**



Rob Tyner

ROLLING STONE

No. 25
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The Rolling Stones, men of wealth and taste. Jon Landau discusses their new album on Page 10.

QUEEN MAGAZINE, LONDON

THE BLIND LEADING THE DEAF THROUGH A DESERT

BY JANN WENNER

LAS VEGAS—Right now I am no longer in Las Vegas, but listening for the first time in three days to the new Beatles album, and just any one song on it tells me more about music, rock and roll, and the recording industry than I was able to find out in two days and two nights at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas, attending and speaking at the annual Bill Gavin Radio Programming Conference, the biggest, most important and influential conference held each year in the record-radio business.

Attending were at least a dozen presi-

dents of multi-million dollar corporations—some of them representing multi-billion dollar corporate superstructures—disc jockeys and promotion men in huge numbers and of all sorts, the programmers of the big radio stations, and so on. In general, record biz hoopla. ("Hi, my name is Dump Deegan, swing shift jock at WSHI in Baltimore and we're just doing the underground thing late at night like we really dig it, but yuh hafta unnerstand the boss doesn't dig the music but we're trying to turn him on.")

Kind Reader, forgive the first-person viewpoint, but there is simply no other

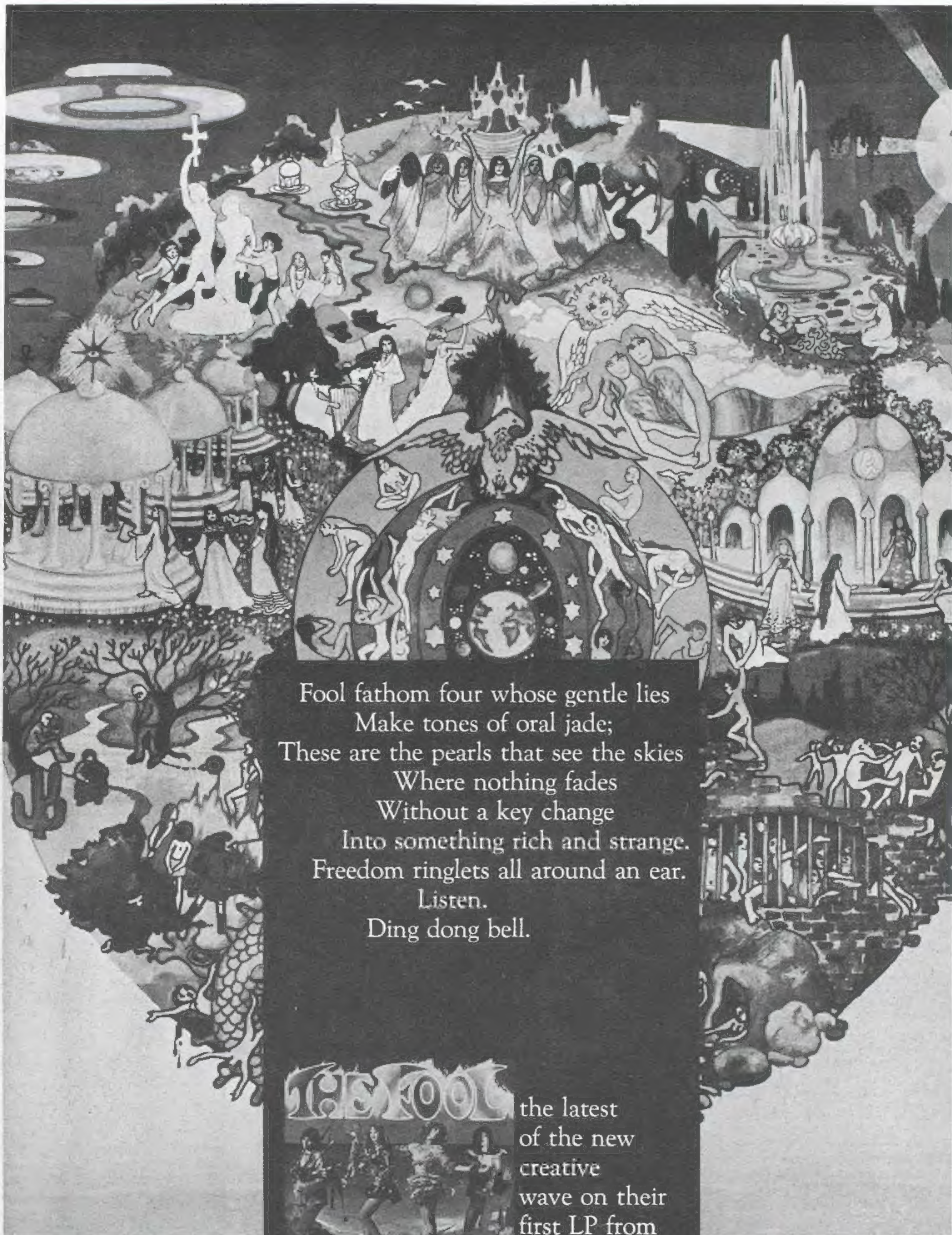
way to chart this little trip—certainly not in any logical sequence—than through the formless and shifting ego. One wants to forswear the ego unless one happens to be as good as Norman Ego; Tom Wolfe, you were right! You must get back to Vegas just for a day to dig a new casino built since you were there: the Circus Circus Casino, an electro-graphic neon sign artist gone wild, not just in designing the sign, but the entire fucking casino. All three floors of it. You just have to get back.

Las Vegas is where the record-radio industry goes to have its annual Bill

Gavin Convention; or it is where Bill Gavin, a radio programming consultant, chooses to have it, and it is an amiable locale to everyone. The top record companies hold their own conventions elsewhere, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Nassau, San Francisco, or in scattered parts of the country—but the most important of them all is in Las Vegas and that's where it's at.

Not everyone prefers to be in Vegas, but that is where they are, nonetheless. The Hotel Riviera was mercifully free of Muzak but also totally devoid of

—Continued on Page 8



Fool fathom four whose gentle lies
 Make tones of oral jade;
 These are the pearls that see the skies
 Where nothing fades
 Without a key change
 Into something rich and strange.
 Freedom ringlets all around an ear.
 Listen.
 Ding dong bell.

THE FOOL



the latest
 of the new
 creative
 wave on their
 first LP from
 Mercury
 Records.

SR 61178



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CORRESPONDENCE, LOVE LETTERS & ADVICE

SIRS:

My 14 year old boy subscribes to your magazine the ROLLING STONE. On the front cover and inside the magazine were nude pictures of that Lennon man (?) and his ugly girl friend.

Do you think that for a few dollars to corrupt a teenager's mind, is worth the corruption? As a parent, this is not the kind of material to be in a teen magazine. If there are any further pictures of this sort, the magazine is not to be sent. In fact I'm writing the Cleveland Press about this filth.

My husband and I both are college graduates and feel that this is a crummy way for you to make a few bucks.

MR. & MRS. DICKERSON
 CLEVELAND, OHIO

SIRS:

Just a friendly letter to inform ROLLING STONE newspaper and its staff of a function they are fulfilling perhaps without even realizing it. I speak of the therapeutic nature of ROLLING STONE. Three out of five interns interviewed in the hospital in which I am currently residing agree that ROLLING STONE has definite therapeutic qualities.

Several days after entering the hospital, I received my current issue of ROLLING STONE (Nov. 23, 1968 issue) by way of a kindly grandmother. Within hours my chills were gone, my fever had diminished and my delirium had reached new heights of delight. No longer did I have to ask the nurse for a codeine pill. I now reach for ROLLING STONE.

CORY DREFKE
 SAN FRANCISCO

SIRS:

Jim Miller's head must have been up his ass when he listened to *Shine On Brightly*. Procol Harum's latest album. I've disagreed with him before—but reducing the collective genius of Procol Harum to a lame excuse for a second-rate Band is absurd.

I don't expect such lapses of taste in ROLLING STONE to go unchallenged—no

doubt I'm not the only outraged Procol Harum lover—so without belaboring Miller's gaffe, let me say that *Shine On Brightly* may well be the LP of the year, and Miller may join Richard Goldstein in the galleries of red-faced, hasty, and ill-advised rock critics. How richly he deserves it!

G. MONTGOMERY
 CERDES, N.Y.

SIRS:

It's a really uncomfortable feeling when you're getting into something new and want time, just you and the band, to get complete stock of it. But you're pressed to put it down in public because the band is anxious to move ahead to the big time. It makes the probability of being in a recording studio a frightening thought—you can imagine your fingers running away with the music and an empty feeling in your genitals wanting to hold it back.

But what's a growing musician to do. Good bands aren't satisfied long with having fun in bars and fraternity houses and bad ones don't teach you much growth. Good bands very soon become very serious about their "fun."

JIMMY
 NEW YORK

SIRS:

Whenever I hear the word "Soul" come from a Black man's lips, as he stands somewhere, a transistor of Aretha to his ear, I have a strong urge to rush up to him, grab him by the lapels, and yell "Soul isn't real, man, they're exploiting you." But I write a letter to Rolling Stone instead.

In *Blues People*, LeRoi Jones describes those who use the term "Soul" as Negroes in Italian suits. The book was published in 1963, and Mr. Jones' attitudes may have changed since then, but I fail to see how Italian suits and the Black racial pride that is implicit in Floyd's letter can exist in the same person.

It is possible that here is a quality in soul music that indiscernible to white

audiences, but no race, color or creed has a monopoly on pain, and it is pain that is the root of Blues guitar whether played by B. B. King, Albert King, Eric Clapton, Mike Bloomfield, Jimi Hendrix, or anybody. Pain affects people in different ways, and each guitarist has a different style. But the blues cannot be faked, and anyone who tries to do so will fail. So, trust your ears when hearing blues, forget your eyes. Color disappears under microscopic magnification, anyway.

As for Janis, her vocal technique is obvious, and whether you like her or not depends on the nature of your sugar tit. I don't recall the bass man with the *Famous Flames*, but I suspect Jack Casady cuts him.

I did like "Dock of the Bay," or is that bastard soul?

JEFF ZWEIG
 BROOKLYN

SIRS:

I've seen two record reviews of John Mayall: *Crusade* (April 6) and *Bare Wires* (October 12). He is often described as boring, untasteful and unmoving.

To each his own. Just explain why you chose not to review *Blues Alone*, released in May sometime. I'm sure you're aware of the background of that LP (in its "uniqueness and glory"). That album has no faults, baby, it's perfect.

T. TAYLOR
 SAN DIEGO

SIRS:

Thanks for printing Floyd Tinsley's letter. It was straight. No shit.

LITTLE SQUISH
 OSSINING, NEW YORK

SIRS:

About Floyd Tinsley's letter in the Nov. 23 issue—the last time I saw James Brown his bass player was white. Must have been a hillbilly.

LITTLE FLIPPY KITCHENS
 ATLANTA, GA.



Stevie Winwood, Jim Capaldi, Chris Wood: to go separate ways

NO MORE TRAFFIC; WINWOOD-CLAPTON RUMORS

BY RITCHIE YORKE

LONDON—Traffic has broken up. The announcement, made in London this week, came at a time when Traffic had finally broken through in the United States.

The group's second album, entitled *Traffic*, made a spectacular one hundred position leap on the trade charts this week, moving over 125,000 copies in five days. It is expected to be the final album by the group. In addition, there are strong rumors that one Traffic member, Stevie Winwood, is to record with ex-Cream guitarist, Eric Clapton.

Members of the trio were unavailable for comment on the split, which was confirmed by Traffic's manager, Chris Blackwell. However, Traffic producer Jimmy Miller, who also cut the Rolling Stones' *Beggars Banquet* album, had this to say about the split and the album:

"I'm absolutely bewildered by the breakup. I'd always felt Traffic was just coming and coming, getting into it more all the time. Each session was shredding restrictions. I really haven't been able to completely accept the split mentally.

"We were all very, very happy with the new LP. I was a little down because I hadn't been quite as intimate with the project as I had been with the first album. At the time we were doing it, I was heavily involved with *Beggars Banquet*. You know, I'd spend four days

on Traffic, and then the next four with the Stones.

"The new album is certainly better than the first. The initial Traffic album was a 'here we come, dig this' sort of thing. We played that down for the second album, and it still came off. As Stevie Winwood says, 'It's just us, just us as we are now.'

"Steve is very serious about it, and wants to go off for a while. He's bewildered by his own creations, and to force a few more doors open, he has to get away from it. There's a strong possibility he'll cut solo and also with well known English musicians.

"We don't have very much in the can. We did cut a single last week, called 'Medicated Goo,' which I really really

like. It was a commercial riff they'd hit upon, which comes out strong for a single. I think it will blow your mind.

"We do have some tapes put down during the group's show at the Fillmore East, but apart from that, there's not much. I really think the current album is the last lot of original stuff you'll be hearing from Traffic.

"It was great working with them. Traffic was a group experimenting with form, pushing musical expansion. It's beautiful that people in the States are hip to what they're doing.

"Some people have said that the new album is all Stevie, but that's not true. It's fairly evenly divided between Steve and Dave Mason."

Rumors that Stevie Winwood is to cut an album with Eric Clapton have been widely circulated throughout London in the past few days. It is understood that discussions have taken place between executives of Island Records (Winwood's releasing label) and Polydor, who continue to hold contracts for all three members of the Cream. The deal would probably be for one album, with "courtesy of Island or Polydor Records" sort of label credit, as occurred in the jazz era when musicians label-hopped doing sessions with other stars.

It is widely known that Clapton has been anxious to work with Winwood. On several occasions he has asked Winwood to his country cottage for a weekend chat about future plans.

Stevie has also been working with Mick Jagger and Jimmy Miller on the next Stones album, as yet untitled, which will be issued in Spring of 1969. On one session, he played organ, piano, drums and guitar.

Winwood came to fame through his stint as organist-singer and sometime guitarist with the Spencer Davis Group. After splitting with the group, he formed Traffic, and had several hit singles in Europe, including "Hole In My Shoe," "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush," and "Feel'n' Alright."

Winwood, meanwhile, is holidaying in Holland.

Janis Joplin's New 'Revue'

SAN FRANCISCO — Janis Joplin played her last gig with Big Brother & the Holding Company, December 1 at the Family Dog for the band's old manager, Chet Helms, and was rehearsing her new band at press time in the Geary Temple adjacent to the old Fillmore Ballroom.

Lineup of the band at presstime (though subject to change) was: Sam Andrew, from the old Big Brother; organist Bill King; trumpeter Marcus Doubleday, from the Electric Flag; Tony Clemens, tenor; Brad Campbell, bass; and Ron Markowitz, drums.

Janis, whose illness caused the cancellation of a number of dates on the final road tour of the group, will unveil the new unit December 21 at a Stax/Volt Christmas party in Memphis.

It is to be called The Janis Joplin Revue, apparently, and Albert Grossman will manage it. He flew to San Francisco for the opening days of the rehearsals. Originally Harvey Brooks was to be the musical director with Skip Procop of the Paupers as drummer but that arrangement incorporated early on.

The JJ Revue is being offered in 1969 at guarantees so high Bill Graham is reported to have balked at the chance to represent them.

Meanwhile, the remaining members of the original Big Brother & the Holding Company are busy.

In San Francisco, drummer David Getz and bassist Peter Albin are rehearsing together and with several other musicians.

James Gurley, lead guitarist, is planning to live in the desert under doctor's orders. He has been ill and is exhausted from the road.

"We hope to have Jimmy back with us after his leave," Albin says. "We're optimistic we can get a group together that swings."

Although no definite personnel has been set, guitarist David Nelson, formerly with the New Delhi River Band,

and Ed Bogus, who wrote and arranged for Buddy Guy, are likely to be involved.

Albin and Getz will debut the group in February or March but it is not settled yet if it will be called Big Brother. Also unsettled are the questions of recording and management contracts with Columbia and Grossman.

In any case, Columbia will release another Big Brother LP with Janis early next year. Tapes are due the company February 1 under the current contract.

JOOLS DENIED WORK PERMIT



Julie: TV special

HOLLYWOOD—Julie Driscoll, Brian Auger and the Trinity, here for a Monkees TV special, were denied United States work permits to perform in concert, thus cancelling scheduled gigs in nearby Anaheim and San Francisco.

"Jools" and the Auger trio, visiting the U.S. for the first time, could have obtained permits, they said, but would have had to wait for two to three weeks. Their upcoming schedule of appearances in England made this impossible, so Atlantic Records picked up the tab for a party at the Whisky a Go Go—so the English act wouldn't leave the country without at least one performance.

The party, assembled at the last moment, attracted one of the most impressive and eclectic collections of musical talent any act has drawn. Among those present: the Monkees, Arthur Brown, the Animals, most of the Jeff Beck group, Jim Morrison, Taj Mahal, members of the Buddy Miles Express and Don Ellis.

The TV special was produced by Jack Good, who previously produced "Shindig" and a black Hamlet, "Catch My Soul," as well as recent TV specials in England. The program has not yet been scheduled for broadcast.

Your Ears Are In Good Hands

NEW YORK—A new study suggests your ears will survive no matter how hopeless a rock freak you may be. A few months ago, scientists (who had studied guinea pigs) weighed in with a horrific report to the effect that prolonged exposure to high-decibel rock and roll would shrivel your hearing apparatus and leave you deaf.

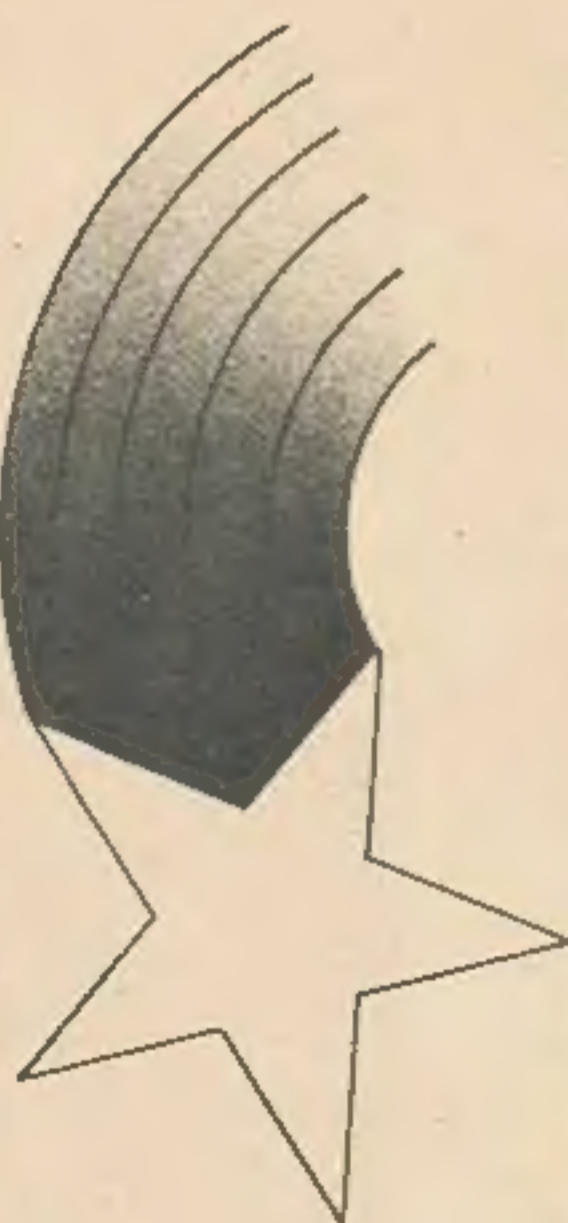
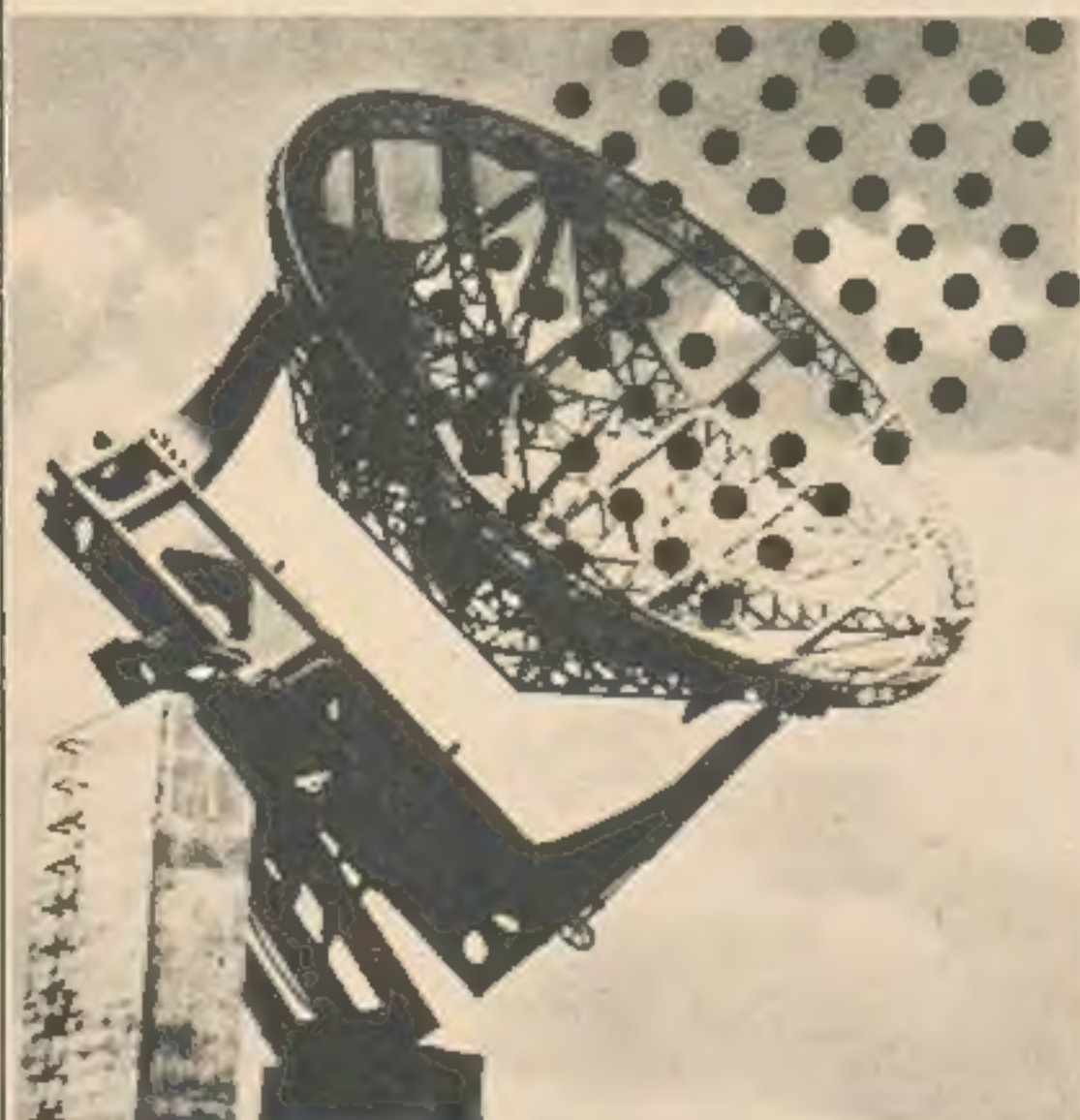
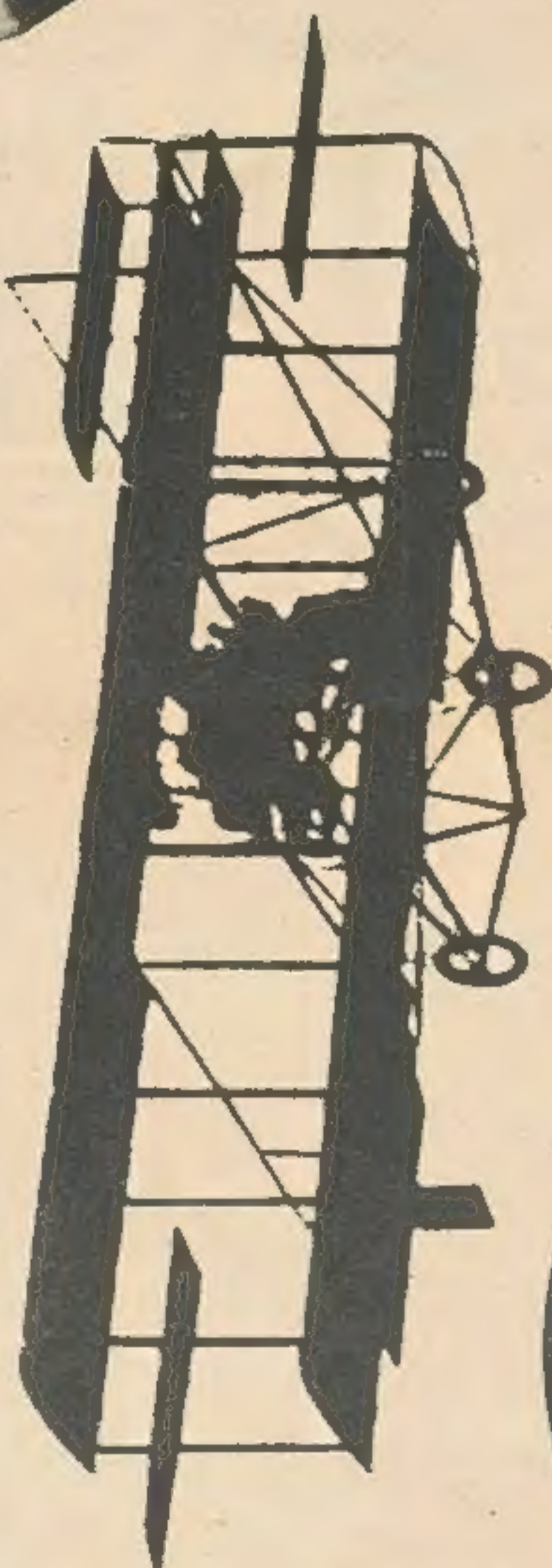
But new findings by Dr. William Rintleman and Judith Borus, auditory scientists at Michigan State Univ., who've studied 42 rock musicians, reveal no such thing.

The 42 musicians had been exposed for an average 2.9 years to 114 hours a week of 105-decibel rock. The American Medical Association says 16 minutes daily at that level of volume causes permanent loss of hearing.

But 40 of the 42 musicians were found to have normal hearing.

Rintleman and Borus conclude: "Since rock and roll musicians generally have more exposure to this type of music than any other single group, one would expect that if this music does not cause hearing loss in these musicians, it probably does not cause hearing loss in any other group."

JEFFERSON AIRPLANE



RCA

Random Notes

We spoke with Allen Ginsberg the other day, as he lay in traction at Albany Memorial Hospital in New York, a Thanksgiving traffic statistic. His roommate Peter Orlovsky (who was unhurt in the accident) was driving back from the Albany Airport, where they'd just deposited poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti, "and he got a little confused," in Ginsberg's words. Resulting in a collision with another car. Only Ginsberg required extended hospitalization, but his injuries were fairly serious: a fractured right hip (the ball that fits into the socket is the specific injured part) and four broken ribs.

"I'm feeling as well as you'd expect," he said. "It was worse at first. I didn't shit for a week—couldn't—and that included Thanksgiving dinner." Ginsberg had planned to review the new Beatles LP for ROLLING STONE, but can't in his current situation, unfortunately. Said the things he dug most in ROLLING STONE were the John-Yoko naked picture and the interviews with Lennon and Jagger, because they got into metaphysics and politics and matters social. "You should have more of that," he said, as our phone connections started to fade.

Dimmer and dimmer now, the phone, only catching phrases "... good feeling about the revolution ..." won't be able to make the college speaking tour now ... couple more weeks here in the hospital, then to the farm for two months ... Fading, fading. Barely audible Ginsberg shouted that he wanted to see a ROLLING STONE interview with George Harrison "... would really like to know what is inside Harrison's head."

Although dates were being offered promoters for the projected Rolling Stones tour of the United States this spring, there may yet be a problem which could prevent the tour altogether. Like Donovan once was arrested for dope, Brian Jones has also been in the same trouble and may be refused entry to the United States to work. We shall see.

The producer and director of the Rolling Stones' movie *One Plus One* exchanged blows at the London premiere of the film. Director Jean-Luc Godard made a ten-minute speech before the film started, in which he urged the audience to ask for their money back in order to donate it to the defense of Black Panther Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver, rather than see the film. About three dozen complied.

In a rage, Godard called the audience a bunch of Fascists and left the stage. As he left he took a punch at Iain Quarrier, the film's producer. Quarrier laid the dispute between them to Godard's opposition to the Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil," included at the end of *One Plus One*, which Quarrier had insisted must be included for the number of Stones fans who will be seeing the film.

Godard's version of the film was shown that night, under Waterloo Bridge in the London rain, to several hundred. Godard told the press he felt people should think about making and showing films in an entirely different way, and it is reported that henceforth Godard will make only 16mm films "for people to see in the streets." Quarrier's argument was that the Stones' song would make the import of the film clearer to younger Stones fans.

Crime does not pay. Nor does it pay to have pot in your home; not an economic level, at any rate. A London court has fined John Lennon £150 (or \$360) for possession of enough shit to make 40 joints—despite his allegation that he no longer touches the stuff. Scotland Yard's pot-hounds sniffed out the weed at Lennon's apartment in mid-October.

Four songs that didn't make the new Beatles records were "Not Guilty," a George Harrison song on which he played

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Ginger Baker at farewell concert

'GOD SAVE THE CREAM'

BY JON COTT

LONDON—Cream's two extraordinary farewell concerts given on November 26 at Royal Albert Hall revealed musically why Cream had to break up. Everyone talks about the personal hangups, but this emphasis veils the perception that Cream was always broken up.

At the conclusion of Ginger Baker's phenomenal solo in "Toad"—Eric pointed at the drummer and said "Ginger Baker!" Ginger took a mike and growled "Jack Bruce!" "Eric Clapton!" This was no ironical display. ("And here right out of Natchez up here to play for you folks: Joe Mop-Eye Jones!") Instead, Cream was acknowledging the fact that it consists of three perfectly formed musical diamonds—no melting green emerald of a group, subsuming hassles and gifts in some opaquely unified identity. But what brilliant hard lights!

What was exhilarating about the sell-out farewell concerts—the second was not only last but best, partly because Clapton played his favorite red guitar—was each member of the group's affirmation of his special gifts—Bruce's subtle whirlwind bass figurations. (Bruce's bass technique is as refreshing and perverse as it is because he plays bass on lead guitar—perhaps this is one reason why the group broke up), Baker's plateaued drum sectionings and textural clarifications, and Clapton's Apollonian elegance and control.

Clapton had his hair short, clean shaven; Baker and Bruce looked rested. But I suppose these were merely physical manifestations of the musical clarity. Each musical line was almost hyper-technically precise (this especially holds for Baker's drumming), and each line fit tightly against the other—parallel lines.

Many persons missed that raunchiness and fuzziness of effect which Cream often used to express—a strained indulgence, I thought. What revealed itself at Albert Hall was the poised quality of the performance, the detachment, the structure looked down upon from the stars—a self-begotten music (Cream is/was three stars) whose brilliance seemed born of itself without labor, for everything seemed effortless.

(This effortlessness distinguished Cream's efforts from the strenuous maneuvers which the two groups which preceded Cream's appearance—Yes and The Taste—made to organize, unsuccessfully, bits of jazz pastiche, sustained deep-dark guitar tones, and rhythmic fractures into some kind of imaginatively conceived entity.)

Cream has never played so formally. This isn't to say that there was no feeling, but rather that the form itself had feeling. And when a stomping-standing audience recalled the group to play "Sunshine" and "Steppin' Out" as encores, the clapping along to the latter song's

opening section was an acknowledgement of the beauty of the forms, not of some kind of expressivity.

When they had finally stopped playing and Cream was at an end—after one encore, and then another—the audience of 5000 stood and stamped and stomped and clapped and cheered, pleading for more, some shouting "God save the Cream!"

Reports here have it that Clapton and Bruce will form backing groups and become attractions on their own. Baker will favor a more unified group concept, with his drums part of that picture.

BBC-TV filmed the second concert for airing on January 5, to the relief of hundreds who were unable to obtain tickets. As yet, there is no indication that the TV special will be shown in the U.S.

More canned Cream (a two-record set) will soon be available, in the form of live and studio recordings made during their final American tour. But henceforward, Cream will exist only on records.

Baker, Bruce, and Clapton purified their approach to their music as much as they could, went as far as they went, and wound up repeating their perfections, like a snake swallowing its tail. As the Bard wrote: "Take pains; be perfect; adieu."



The above is a photograph Chess Records used in a trade advertisement for the Christmas album of a group named The Rotary Connection. Santa looks like he has had it. So has the album: rack jobbers (a trade term for distributors who place records in supermarket racks) and some other uptight portions of the merchandising end of the record distribution scene are refusing to handle the album at all.

Family Dog Shot Down

SAN FRANCISCO—The police and a hotel full of aged pensioners (who say late-night rock and roll has robbed them of sleep) have won. The Family Dog, the scores of bands it has presented, and the thousands who've come to hear them, have lost. It's final now: The city police permit board has made its revocation of the Family Dog's license to hold dances at the Avalon Ballroom stick.

In their last bid to get back Family Dog's license, Chet Helms, head of the production company, and his attorney, Michael Stepanian, tried to present evidence that one old man had been offered a bribe to give false testimony against the Avalon.

But the board refused even to hear the new evidence on behalf of the beleaguered ballroom. Board president Peter Boudoures said simply: "There will be no more talking about this." And that was it.

Contacted by ROLLING STONE later, Boudoures said that whether or not there was new evidence was "irrelevant—because there were more than one charge against those heepies." But what if the new evidence proved all the charges false? "They would still be irrelevant," he said, "because we already heard so much."

Among the complaints he had heard from the police, said Boudoures, is that "LSD was openly smoked there." Not that police had ever arrested anyone (there—or anywhere else) for smoking LSD. Nor have there been any narcotics busts at the Avalon, ever.

But Boudoures—who granted that he'd never been there himself—said he knew that the Family Dog had attracted "every kind of undesirable person" to the neighborhood. A majority of his board seemed to agree with him.

Thus ended Family Dog's last chance to sustain operations which began 32 months earlier at the Avalon.

Helms has decided that the cost of a continued fight through the appeals boards, and then the courts, would be too high. He is seeking a new location, probably in a different neighborhood from the Polk-Sutter area where hostile neighbors testified that his clientele pissed on their sidewalks.

The last weekend at the Avalon, Helms found it necessary to pay \$900 for three days (his rate as tenant was \$1400 a month). The deal came through too late to do much advertising, and only 400 came Saturday night for Johnny Winter, Magic Sam and Kaleidoscope.

Wouldn't it bankrupt the Family Dog to keep going at the Avalon? "I don't know, man," said Helms, "it's almost a mark of honor to let these people know they can't scare us."

Pardon Us, But It's Christmas

Christmas comes but once a year, as they say, and so we at ROLLING STONE, are planning to take a little vacation ourselves. We've decided to skip the issue that would—if we followed our every other Wednesday schedule—normally go to press on Wednesday, December 25.

Our printer told us that he wouldn't be in on that day, and neither would the press crew, so we had a choice of either Tuesday, Thursday, or skipping it altogether. We decided to skip it altogether and take a breather.

So, there won't be a "next" issue, but there will be an "issue after that." The IAT ("Issue After That") will be our Second Annual Look Back In Anger Issue (LBIA) with our Second Annual Reminiscence of the year just past and the Second Annual ROLLING STONE Awards for general excellence and superfluity in all its forms.

If you happen to be in the big city on vacation, and have stumbled upon our little publication, do yourself a favor and make sure you see another one. Clip the handy subscription coupon, and ROLLING STONE will be winging its merry way to you every other week. That is, until the next time Christmas falls on Wednesday, when you can be sure that we'll be taking the day off.

HERD A BEAST LATELY?



THE FIRST ALBUM BY **RHINOCEROS** ON **elektra**
EKS-74030



Las Vegas Report: Inside the Circus Circus

—Continued from Page One

rock and roll, the most important item on the agenda. Except for a handful of executives heavily devoted to the creative end of the record business, particularly A&R, and an even smaller handful functioning in non-business music capacities (only one or two actual performers) the conference atmosphere and approach was most like a meeting of washing machine and refrigerator distributors and manufacturers.

There were only two variations on their style: for one thing it was integrated and there was more than a fair proportion of black people, mainly disc jockeys, promotion men, middle-level record people and an occasional vice president. The other was the style itself: carefully trimmed reddish sideburns, yellow-tinted sunglasses in the wide-lens, gold-wire rim fashion, moccasins and/or buckskin jackets with fringes, all of it so neatly done.

Three other basic molds included cigar chompers and sports shirts (generally the owners of local record distribution operations and old time record men); very dignified pin-striped sports suits and white shirts (the highest executives of the biggest of companies, the ones with the fantastic amounts of personal money to spend and a corporate style based on that assumption) and the hip people, whose styles of clothes and dress ranged from the well-heeled to the not so well-heeled, all of them identifiable by the excess of their unmannered, long or longish hair, the wildness of their eyes and their general weird and strange behavior.

I arrived on a Friday night, as the talk I was invited to give, on the FM radio panel, was scheduled for Saturday. The room I had at the Hotel Riviera where the conference was headquartered, was an orgy of plasticized antiquated pieces, done in olive green and brown drab flaked with gold; long mirrors and plastic-leaved bushes in front of royal green artificial silk curtains. The bathroom, right off a separate dressing room, contained an ice box and a wall-telephone next to the shower.

My window held a panoramic view of the hotel and casino strip. The particular feature from my side of the hotel was a glorious and intimate view of the Stardust Hotel sign exploding stardust bursts into the night. Tom Wolfe, in a piece in *New York Magazine*, footnoted this information: "The most spectacular effects, as in the new 188-foot high Stardust Hotel and Casino sign in Las Vegas, still use fields of light bulbs for the most brilliant effect, plus plastic facings, acrylic colors, and neon for outlining letters and other high-light effects. The Stardust sign, by Ad Art Company, of Stockton, California, has 25,000 bulbs, 611,000 watts of power, and solid state programming with 27 different lighting sequences."

Amidst all this, the record-radio circus is enacted downstairs in the Riviera lobby as the velvet-trousered troops of the manufacturers and the silk shirts and on and on chase each other around the casino floor, weaving among the slots, around baccarat tables, through roulette wheels, over blackjack stools, in the endless hustle.

And who was there, if not to hustle or to be hustled?

My God, I ran into Brian Rohan, the hippie attorney from San Francisco, who first got into the scene through his defense work for Ken Kesey; now Brian Rohan, the wheeling-dealing lawyer for a dozen rock groups from San Francisco. Brian Rohan is out tonight in Las Vegas cruising the casino. Kesey would you dig it?

And John Carpenter, one of the original rock and roll hippies, once the manager of the Great Society, a partner in the Family Dog, there when the rock and roll scene started long ago in its relaxed and luxurious abundance (so little of that left now). Yes, John Carpenter, now the rock critic for the Los Angeles Free Press, weekly chronicling the doings of the Los Angeles pop society—so open and foolish in his heart. Yes, John Carpenter is here tonight in Las Vegas, looking totally wiggled in the most unconscious way, with a cape over his shoulder—yes, John Carpenter, flown here, fed and housed by Columbia Records.

There are the dozens of cats whom you've never met before saying to you: "Nice seein ya again, babe." You ask yourself, "Whaaaat?" I was walking

around with the Big Daddy, Tom Donahue, one-time king of San Francisco Top 40 stations, now the king of the FM rock scene—you can't miss Big Daddy, 300 pounds and a black beard, and everybody stops Tom for a handshake and a "Hey, Babe." It was not in Big Daddy's stars to be inconspicuous.

The Gavin Conference is not important for what it's accomplished; most of the significant issues are honeyed over in ten-minute speeches. What's important is that industry respect for Mr. Gavin is so high that he has been in the position for the past three years of providing the only neutral ground for a radio-record industry get-together, and it looks like everybody is there, in the land of the silver dollar hustle.

There's Tom Dowd, chief engineer for Atlantic Records, a graying but boyish figure, so impeccable in his musical abilities, so pleasant in his manner, a warm man of the music accepting awards for himself, Jerry Wexler, and Atlantic Records (named by Bill Gavin as the record company of the year, which it obviously was in 1968).

Some of the record executives are fascinating people, either men in close creative contact with the music, the men to whom serious artistic attention must be paid, and others wielding tremendous corporate wealth and power in the rock and roll field, also men to whom attention must be paid, men who operate in a highly rarified sphere, one which affects sideways the course of popular music.

Clive Davis, for instance, president of Columbia Records. No one calls him Mr. Davis. His style is so good that everyone knows him and knows him as Clive—"Oh yes, just yesterday I told Clive that . . ." Columbia Records is the largest, in terms of sales, record company in the United States. Alone among the pre-rock major labels, it has gone with rock and roll, done so with taste, and made millions in return. Everyone at Columbia says that this is due to Clive.

Next to his boss, Goddard Lieberson, president of the Columbia Group, Clive is the suavest three-button double-blazer, pin-stripe in muted blue executive in the record business. He is a supreme cultivation of the cultural style of the modern American corporation. Clive speaks in the softest tones, with inflections and eyebrows, and the most well-picked words. To me, it is slightly incredible to hear a person speak in such a literate manner of rock and roll—always with the right question or bit of information—in such dispassionate terms and with such elegant turn of phrase.

But the Columbia Rock Machine does have some real turn-ons. So what do you make of that?

Earlier there had been Big Daddy, wandering around the casinos, among the 24-year-old couples, who are so amazingly an innocent part of the American Dream that they have come to Vegas to play the slots for their honeymoons. Soon they all turn exaggerated and disproportioned—the LSD faces of yesterday.

Later that evening, I returned to my room, a little dazed. Room service delivered my two cokes and a turkey sandwich with potato salad. They had not included a napkin or a fork or a knife and spoon, but they did bring two beer can openers.

Local Las Vegas TV commercials are all based on a car-lot salesman level version of the Johnny Carson format, where the sponsor himself sits at a table with the TV announcer and gives a personal talk about his muffler service, beauty salon, motel or Chinese kitchen (the Chinaman brought with him a plate of sweet and sour pineapple shrimp.) The late-night movie was *Across the Pacific*, with Humphrey Bogart pursuing the traitor, Sidney Greenstreet.

The next day, Saturday, I attended two panels, speaking at one, and heard Goddard Lieberson, head of the Columbia Group, give the luncheon keynote, if I may borrow a phrase from the GOP convention. The morning panel was a discussion of Top 40 Radio which took place in the Versailles Room. One heard some intelligent and informed remarks—about six times in the entire panel. Joe Smith, the vice president and general manager of Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, was by far the most intelligent.

Joe came up through the record promotion end, with a genius for talking, and engaging charm. He was once William E. Buckley's roommate at Yale.

Anyway, Joe got up there and, in his totally stone blunt and totally forgivable and humorous manner, told the panelists representing the Top 40 stations and those in the audience connected with the Top 40 scene, that they were tasteless, boring, narrow-minded, ignorant, stupid, uncreative and totally without any sense of humor. He was right and they all knew it and applauded. Unfortunately that won't change things very much.

The luncheon took place at noon. Mo Ostin, general manager of Reprise Records happens along, and Mo is one of the genuine "our people" in the record business. Mo says "Man, I never got to tell you what finally happened."

I thought, "Whaaaat?"

I hadn't seen him in two months and the first thing he does is resume a conversation I had completely forgotten about that we'd had at the Big Sur Folk Festival. "What happened?" was that Mo and his young son were having difficulty finding a place to stay. They wound up driving about 200 miles in all directions but could only find No Vacancy signs. Mo said they finally ended up spending the night in their car.

Mo knows. We had lunch at the same table and the conversation went back and forth. "Man," I said, "this place is so incredible. Last night, I spent the evening wandering around the casino . . ." And Mo interrupts and says "Smashed out of your head," and then he laughs.

Lieberson was introduced at length by his protegee, Clive Davis. Lieberson said of the record industry, "We think of singles and albums and bands and 4 and 8 and 16 tracks, we think of product. But we don't often enough stop to think of music and its qualities . . ."

He told the audience that contemporary music is good and valuable in its own right (although he had to justify it by comparison with modern classical composers, bringing in, of course, some salient details from the Columbia "Back to Rock" promotion) and, of course, Lieberson is right: rock and roll is music, and that ought to be an equally salient point to the record industry as sales.

For Lieberson's speech, the Columbia sales staff and promotion men all showed up wearing red, white and green Columbia Records polo shirts.

The FM radio panel, on which I participated, was moved from the smaller Montmartre Room to the larger Versailles Room because of the unanticipated interest in the subject of the new rock music. Since this was the only forum that was developed for the music itself (neither Lieberson nor Davis attended), it seemed to me one of the most important possible discussions of that weekend.

Although it hardly worked hard enough, it was a unique panel, with Tom Donahue, myself, and Jac Holzman, president of Elektra Records. The topics raised concerned sex, revolution, education, dope, and music. As such, it was the only panel where the reality of today's music was touched upon.

Following our panel, Jac Holzman and I took a nervous stroll through the hotel. In the elevator, Jac pointed out that the place was wallpapered with imitation alligator-skin, done in a pinkish-red hue. A few minutes later we were off to visit Las Vegas, waiting for us right outside the hotel door. Right across the street from us, the location of Circus Circus Casino, the grandest of them all!

Circus Circus Casino is the newest gambling structure in Las Vegas; unlike all the other famed casinos, this one does not have a hotel, and thus makes all its money from gambling, something no other business there has been able to do. They seem to be doing it remarkably well. It is a place of American wonder; decadent is not the word for it, the word is "unreal."

From the outside the Circus Circus Casino appears in the shape of a gaudy red and white circus tent. At the entrance is a neon sign atop a merry-go-round as a tribute to electrographic sign art advertising; inside the place is built on the theory of the Guggenheim Museum with three lazily descending spiral floors, with a thousand games and distractions on each floor, until it reaches the bottom where there is the casino pit,



location of the tables, slots and wheels.

The pit is open all the way to the roof, and thus every floor has a view of it. But thirty feet over the open casino pit is a circus net and above that platforms for a high-wire balancing act and swings for a major trapeze show. These attractions take place every fifteen minutes, but the gambling continues at a furious pace, unaware of what is taking place overhead.

The rest of the three floors contain a number of attractions, combining aspects of the circus, the sideshow, the carnival, television, and all of it done in a highly glossy Disneyland reality. Little restaurants, bars, acts, games, all based on the idea of gambling and spending quarters, nickels, dimes, half-dollars and even dollar bills. (One slot machine takes only dollar bills. Incredible.)

As you walk in (\$1.25 cash admission) you begin this giant wandering trek through the three floors, encountering items of sheer amazement.

Everything in Las Vegas is highly overdone in the most garish pastels and Day-Glo; it is all bright, designed for the most superficial kind of comfort—comfort for the material ego, not the soul—and it is highly uncomfortable. There is not a mellow moment to be found in all of Las Vegas. If it isn't the color, it is the metallic chatter of ice cubes in glasses; if it isn't that, it is the clothes. A thorough survey may prove it impossible to buy a plain white, or decently tasteful shirt in all of Las Vegas.

It is totally synthetic. We wandered about the floors and the gaming pits for three hours, totally disbelieving, with eyes hanging right out of our heads. On the top floor is a round steel cabinet labeled "peek show!" For a quarter you could peek, and peek we did through the binocular-shaped lenses on which a quarter opened the steel slots. The sight was a perfumed young lady of the Playboy center-spread genre doing a topless dance.

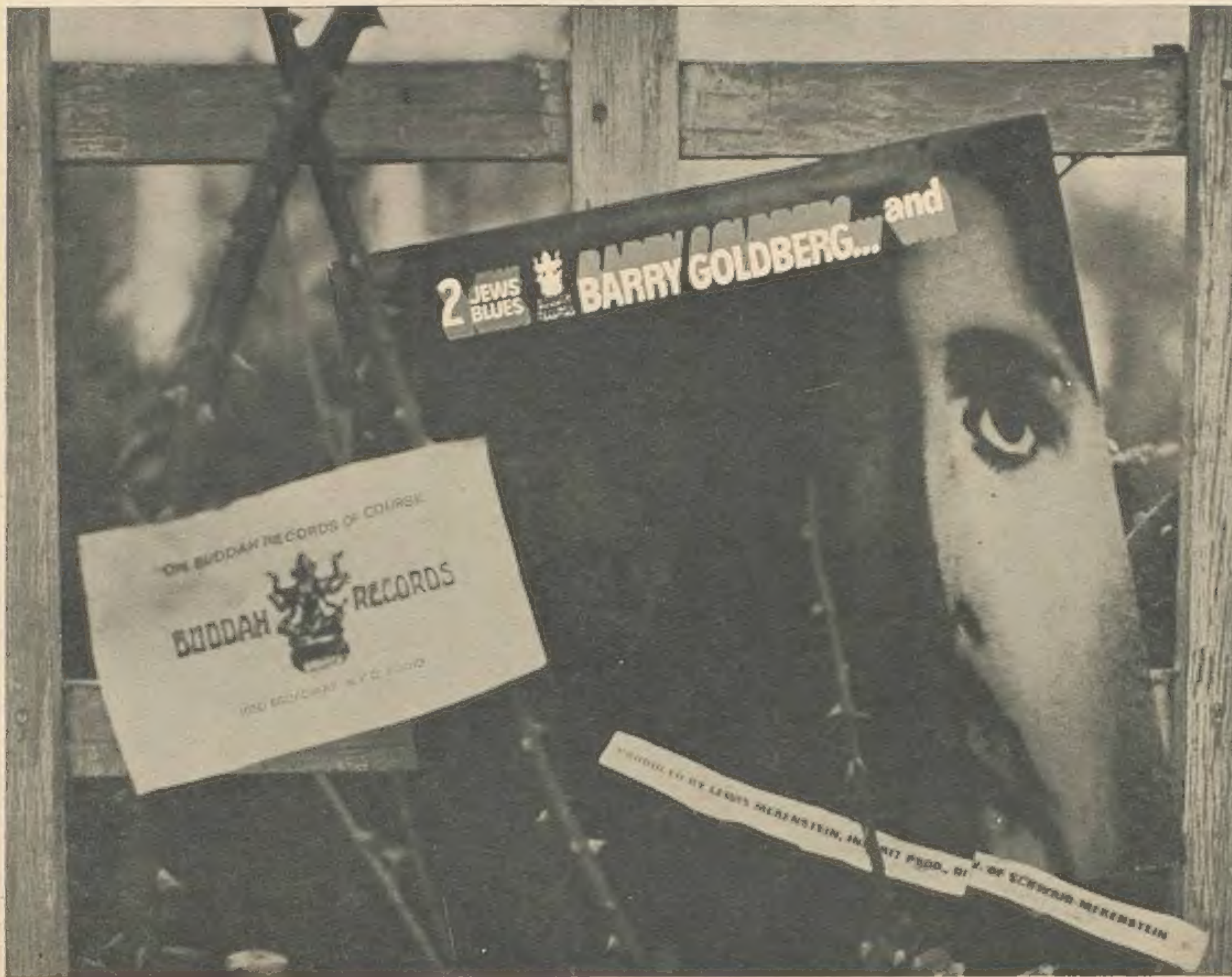
There were dozens of attractions like this or on this ideological level, including one curtained booth where those game enough (and over 21) could throw a baseball at a small target in front of a net, behind which two unclothed women were seductively laying on couches, coaxing those in attendance to the tune of a brashly muted Duane Eddy-ish soundtrack. If you hit the ball (which we saw someone do) the ladies toppled out of their couches, sans silk scarves, and did a lunging dance for the small closed-in audience while the volume of the music tripled.

As we wandered about the gambling floor (and no one who is gambling pays any attention to the trapeze act over their heads, the games and entertainment so effectively keeping from the tables anyone who isn't into serious gambling) a cop removed me to a back room for having neither an ID nor a good haircut.

I was taken to a security room through a doorway at the bottom level; a moment through the door, the cemented construction of the building lay revealed. Despite all the plastic decor on inside the building run amuck, no one had even bothered to paint the pipes or tile the ceiling once into the back-room area.

And there, I and Jac Holzman were thrown out the back door of the Circus Circus Casino, the ultimate indignity of Las Vegas.

—Continued on Page 30



Sea Train

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APPEARING AT
THE MATRIX-SAN FRANCISCO
DECEMBER 17-22



BEGGAR'S BANQUET



JIM MARSHALL

Mick at a U.S. concert two years ago



BY JON LANDAU

On the surface rock and roll changes at an amazing pace. The influence of a figure like the Maharishi can appear and disappear in a matter of months. Talk about old fashioned rock and roll finds itself dead before it begins. Yet some things do remain, while others maintain enough of their former selves so that the logic of their growth at least makes itself obvious.

An example of someone who doesn't change is Elvis Presley. His recent TV special was a testimony to the vitality of his original style. How many rock stars of today might be able, ten years from now, to do an hour of the songs of 1968 and make it come alive as a contemporary experience? Presley at his best is about as eternal as rock and roll can ever expect to be.

The Rolling Stones are constantly changing but beneath the changes they remain the most formal of rock bands. Their successive releases have been continuous extensions of their approach, not radical redefinitions, as has so often been the case with the Beatles. The Stones are constantly being reborn, but somehow the baby always looks like its parents.

In many ways 1968 has turned into another one of those blues revival years. The Stones were into that when it was still verboten to show up at Newport with an electric guitar. It wasn't until five years after they recorded "King Bee" that Slim Harpo finally made it into a white rock club. Happily, even back then, the Stones never got bogged down in the puritanism that mars so many of the English blues bands. They were from the beginning a rock and roll blues band. They may have mimicked Harpo note for note, Keith Richards may have played a straight Chuck Berry bag for three-quarters of their first album, but it always wound up sounding like rock and roll: loud, metallic, and trebly. The Stones were the first band to say, "Up against the wall, motherfucker" and they said it with class.

Since that beginning the Stones have tried their hands at a lot of things: arrogance, satire, social commentary, "psychedelia," lewdness, love songs, you name it. Each phase seemed to flow naturally from the one that preceded it and none of their phases ever really changed their identity as a band. In every album but one it seemed to me that they managed to feel the pulse of what was happening now and what was about to happen. For example, "Satisfaction," that classic of the rock and roll age, both expressed the feelings of a moment and foreshadowed what was about to unfold: the elevation of rock and roll to the primary cultural means of communication among the young. There we were in the early summer of 1965 with folk music dead and nothing really exciting going on. And then there were the Stones sneering at the emptiness of what so many people saw all around them, not telling you to do anything about it, but letting you know that they feel it too. The music, with its incessant, repetitious, pounding guitar and drums, and that tension filled voice, was so permeated with violence that just listening to it was cathartic.

And the Stones live. If the violence of their music was cathartic, how to describe their concerts? I saw them several times during their early American tours, most memorably in Lynn, Massachusetts, in the spring of 1966. The Stones had their usual major dates lined up on their itinerary and the Lynn gig was not one of them. Lynn is a suburb of Boston and they must have decided to do a quickie number for less than their usual fee in order to fill in an open night. The concert was held in an open air football field that held 10,000 people. It rained that evening, a steady drizzle, and when they finally came on there was a lot of tension and movement.

Everyone wanted to get the show done so that they could put the money into the bank. There was no possibility of a makeup date. Jagger emerged in a tee shirt and spread his hands out like Jesus. He thanked everyone for being there and the band went into "19th Nervous Breakdown." The instruments were out of tune, as well as nearly inaudible. Watts had trouble keeping the beat. Everything was a mess except for Jagger who miraculously managed to deliver. He filled the song with drive and energy and it was enthralling to hear him ringing out through the drizzle over practically no instrumental support. The band went on its disappointed way for the



entire set unable to worry about the sound while the rain was pouring down on them, and Jagger continued to go his.

The crowd that night was filled with high school kids and the were very restless. A group of them had massed in front of the stage and the local DJ who had presided over the show decided to come on stage and tell the kids that the concert wouldn't go on until they all pulled back. The Stones ignored him and went on with "The Last Time."

As the set drew to a close they went into "Satisfaction." I had seen them do it under ideal circumstances a year earlier and it had been superb. They had gone through the song then with full energy and intensity and then quieted things down a little. Jagger had taken off his jacket and put it near the drums. Then he had picked up a tambourine and walked around the different sides of the stage, talking to the chicks. Towards the end, the band had picked up to full volume, Jagger had thrown the tambourine into the audience, draped his jacket over his shoulder, and done a Frank Sinatra exit. As soon as he had vanished, the band followed him. It had been an altogether beautiful and tragic spectacle.

Jagger attempted the same bit that night and got as far as picking up the tambourine. The audience broke the police line and completely surrounded the stage. Brian Jones signalled to Jagger, who was in a trance, that they had better split. The cops did their best to clear a path but by this time there were literally hundreds of kids milling around what was supposed to have been the Stones' exiting area. When the Stones got into their limousines the cops started exploding tear gas. Idiots that they are, they neglected to put on masks to protect themselves from the gas and were soon incapacitated by their own tear gas cannisters. A great deal of commotion ensued but presumably the group made it out of there safely.

Violence. The Rolling Stones are violence. Their music penetrates the raw nerve endings of their listeners and finds its way into the groove marked "release of frustration." Their violence has always been a surrogate for the larger violence their audience is so obviously capable of.

On *Beggar's Banquet* the Stones try to come to terms with violence more explicitly than before and in so doing are forced to take up the subject of politics. The result is the most sophisticated and meaningful statement we can expect to hear concerning the two themes—violence and politics—that will probably dominate the rock of 1969.

Politics has not been fashionable since Dylan left it among musicians. There have always been the few hold-outs left over from the folk music period, but despite the mass media's continually mistaken references to rock and roll as "protest music," rock musicians have done remarkably little protesting. Protest is a hallmark of the liberal. It is an appeal to the conscience of the majority to remedy some injustice being done to the minority. It presupposes a belief that meaningful change can be worked out within the system. Rock and roll musicians, for the most part, don't buy that. They don't take things like government seriously unless they are forced to. They find the whole political process something worthy of contempt.

Protest singers in the past were most often ideologues who set pallid verse to semi-musical melodies. The idea that it is the music that should convey the brunt of their meaning never occurred to them. There were words and there were notes but there wasn't any music.

The people who are turning to political themes in their music now are different. They don't do it as a luxury, or for moral reasons. They are doing it because it is part of their lives and they have to express themselves in terms of how what is happening in the streets is affecting their lives.

Personal feelings are becoming increasingly related to political ones and political problems are becoming inextricably bound up with personal ones. In the United States the band which has best come to terms with these connections is the MC 5. That band isn't protesting anything. They are giving orders: "Kick out the jams, motherfucker." They are offering advice. "It's time to get down with it, brother." And they are asking questions: "Are you going to be the problem or the solution?" Their idea of politics includes balling, dope, eating, drinking, fighting, and music.

The 5 are young and they are seeking youthful ways to express their feelings. The Stones are a bit older, have been through a lot more, are far better musicians, and are more sanguine about their roles. But in the larger sense they are part of the same thing: there is no way they can separate themselves as human beings from what is going on "out there." It isn't a question of feeling sorry for people in India, as Paul McCartney seems to think. The point is that the things that keep those people in a state of near starvation are the same ones that may force John to take a drug rap, that almost sent Brian Jones to jail, and which has forced Elridge Clever into hiding. Sooner or later, something brings that home to each of us.

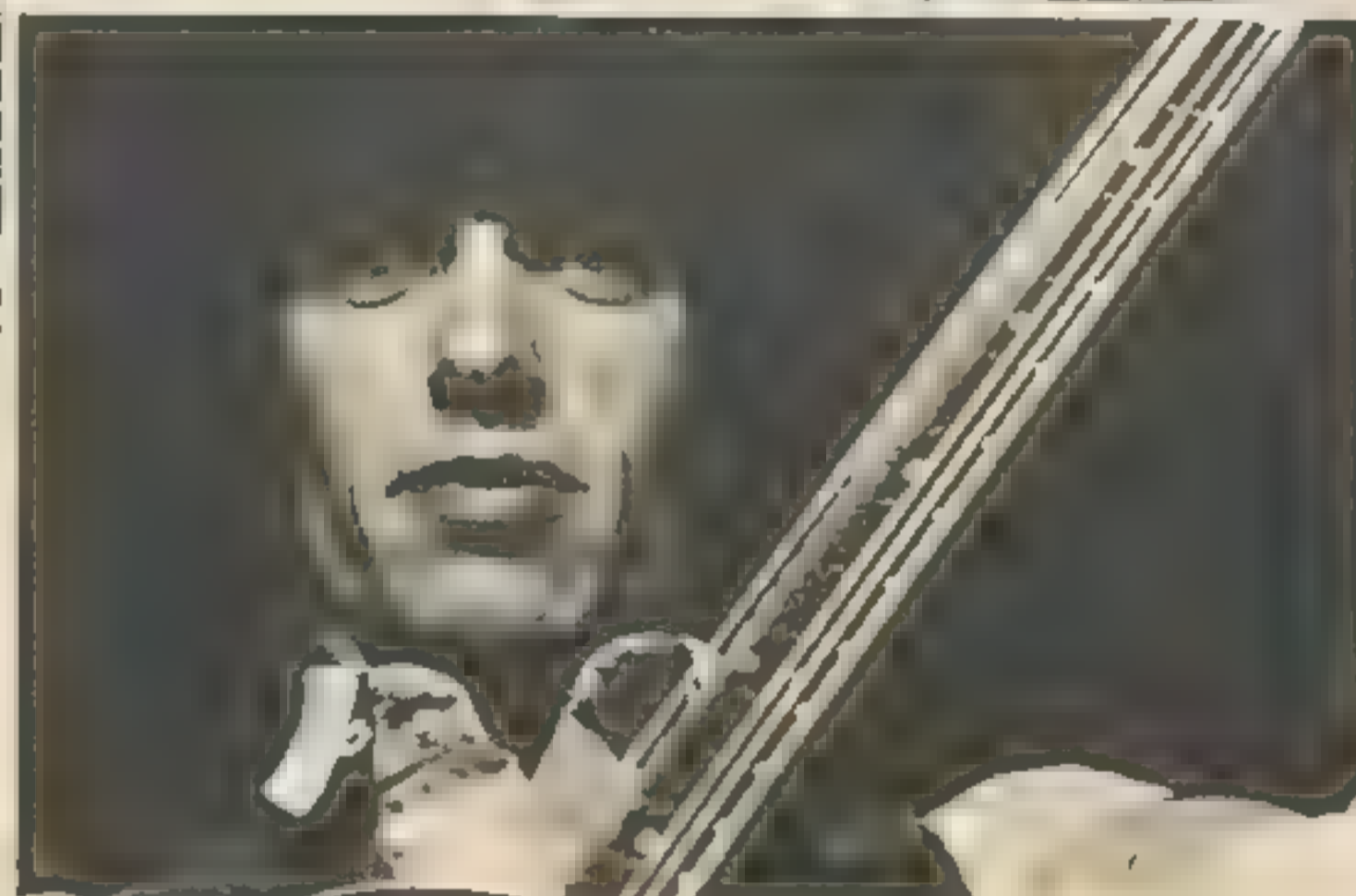
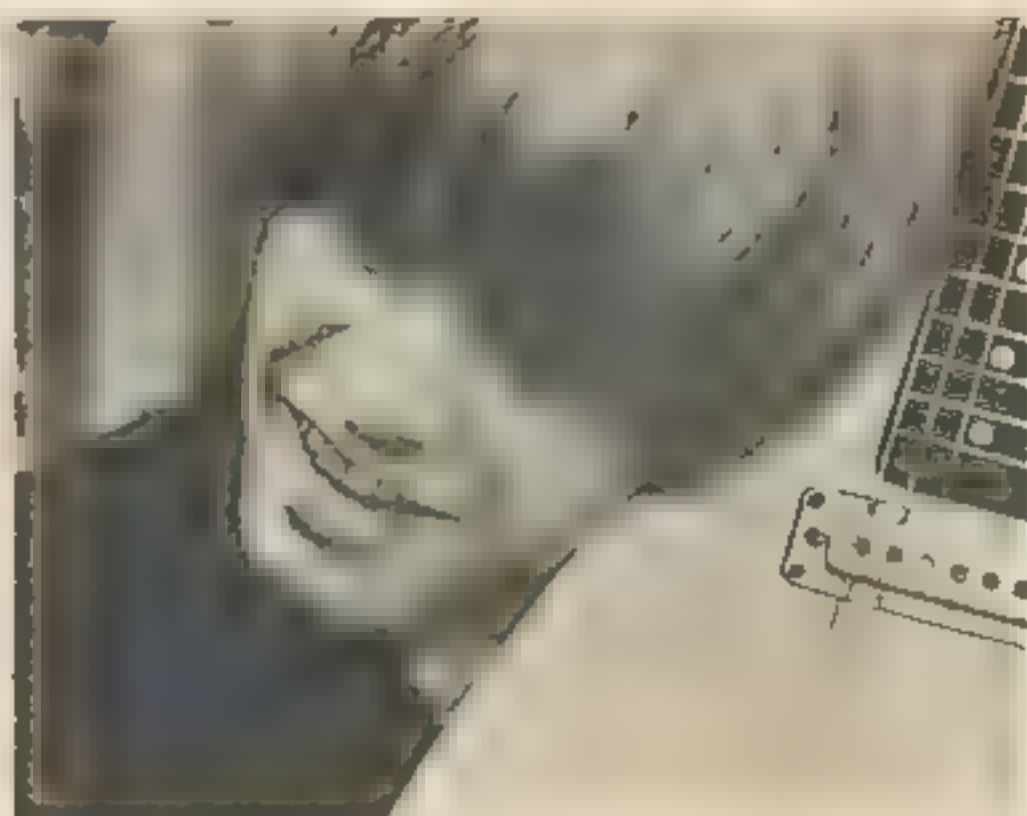
Beggar's Banquet is not a polemic or manifesto. It doesn't advocate anything. It is a reflection of what goes on at the Stones house, with a few pictures of the house itself thrown in for good measure. Part of what that house looks like has to do with what it's surrounded by and the most startling songs on the album are the ones that deal with the Stones environment: "Salt of the Earth," "Street Fighting Man," and "Sympathy for the Devil." Each is characterized lyrically by a schizoid ambiguity. The Stones are cognizant of the explosions of youthful energy that are going on all around them. They recognize the vio-

lence inherent in these struggles. They see them as movements for fundamental change and are deeply sympathetic. Yet they are too cynical to really go along themselves. After all, they are rock and roll musicians, not politicians, and London is such a "sleepy town."

They make it perfectly clear that they are sickened by contemporary society. But it is not their role to tell people what to do. Instead, they use their musical abilities like a seismograph to record the intensity of feelings, the violence, that is so prevalent now. From the beginning they themselves have been exponents of emotional violence and it's hard to imagine any group more suited to voicing the feelings of discontent we all share in these most violent of times. Wherever they wind up themselves, they are writing songs of revolution because they are giving powerful expression to the feelings that are causing it.

Musically the Stones express themselves through three basic elements: rhythm, tension, and energy. "Street Fighting Man" is prototypical of the approach. Drummer Charlie Watts lays down an elementary drum pattern, the same one he has been using since "Route 66." He strikes the high-hat with a near compulsive regularity and hits the snare drum with such a wallop it's hard to believe the sound is coming out of only one drum. The rhythm guitar is laid over the drum and is characterized by a violent attack which emphasizes the "on" beat. The bass pattern is simple and restrained. Like the guitar it serves to magnify the impact of the beat. The collective effect of the instrumental track is of fantastic thrust forward.

The beat is constantly being pushed, the guitars constantly re-emphasizing the basic movement of the song, the bass providing the perfect floor to the arrangement. And then the voice: Jagger is the source of the tension. At his best (definitely on this track) he sounds like he's fighting for control, fighting to be heard over the din of the instruments.



JIM MARSHALL



For all its simplicity it is an amazingly complex style of arranging and a perfect vehicle for expressing the lyrics.

The words are beautiful. Notice how Jagger emphasizes them: "Ev-ry where I hear the sound of charg-ing, march-ing peo-ple." The Stones obviously revel in the images of charging people: they've sure seen enough of them at their concerts. But they are too mature and too realistic to fall into the trap of slogans and easy answers. All they can really do is sing in a rock and roll band.

"Salt of the Earth" continues in the same vein and serves as Jagger's tribute to the "other half." Lyrically, the song's point of view is again ambiguous. Jagger obviously wants to empathize with the "common foot soldier," the working man, the man who is forced to throw his life away on "back-breaking work" without ever achieving satisfaction. On the other hand, when he looks into their "faceless crowds," they look "strange." He has gotten to a point where he can't really come to terms with their way of thinking. Nonetheless, the tribute goes on and begins to sound a bit like a drinking song. At one point I expect them to all be standing around the bar toasting the veterans of the Spanish Civil War. The double time at the end pushes the song past that stage and helps it regain its movement and vitality. It is typical of Jagger's honesty that he was unafraid to use a soldier as symbol of "The Salt of the Earth." They are as much victims as anyone else.

"Sympathy for the Devil" rounds out the group of ambiguous, socially aware songs. To me, it is the most distinguished song and performance of the year. Lyrically, it is a striking picture of a world gone mad. Cops are criminals. Saints are sinners. God is the devil. Whoever is on top makes whoever is beneath him the enemy; actually, it is always the men on top who are the enemy. Those who claim righteousness for themselves are only interested in

perpetuating their own power. Those they vilify are really the righteous ones, until they achieve power for themselves. Then they imitate their predecessors and the process repeats itself through history. The narrator, Lucifer, was there when "Jesus Christ had his moment of doubt, of pain." He was there when "the blitzkrieg raged and the bodies stank." And he lays "traps for troubadors who get killed before they reach Bombay." And who is telling us all this? A man of wealth and taste. Sounds like what a lot of people would like to become.

The music is brilliant. The cut opens with just the percussion—a sort of syncopated Bo Diddley, precisely the kind of thing Watts excels at. Then they add Nicky Hopkins' rhythm piano, perfectly understated. Wyman's simple bass line matches Watts' syncopation perfectly. Throughout the cut he adds color to the basic rhythm pattern by throwing in some very pretty, loopy bass lines. After two verses of Jagger's singing, the background voices add that ultra simple "oo-oo" accompaniment which continues to grow for the duration of the cut. By the time they reach the end, they sound like a plane taking off, accelerating at an inexorable pace until it finally reaches its normal flight speed, at which point it levels itself off.

Jagger sings with tension and control, constantly pushing himself as far as he can go, but never crossing over that line between power and excess. The guitar solo by Richard is among the finest rock solos I have heard recently. He only uses about five of the simplest rock lines around but he plays them with such finesse they seem to be oozing out of the guitar. His style is pure eroticism and he seems to linger over each note, making sure it comes out exactly like it's supposed to.

Watts, with Jagger, provides the energy. He keeps his little riff going like a computer. Towards the end he expands his part by a bit: he starts throwing out cymbal smashes on the first

beat of each measure. It provides just that extra bit of rhythm and drive.

The rest of the album is made up of largely conventional Stones styled songs. There are some mediocre ones among them, but then that part of the Stones. Consistency is not their bag. Among the really fine cuts are "Doctor, Doctor," "No Expectations," "Factory Girl" and "Stray Cat Blues." "No Expectations" is noteworthy for its sentimental melancholy. It has a lovely country feel to it, without actually being an attempt at country music. "Factory Girl" is more of the Stones interest in the working class (remember "Backstreet Girl") and has a New Lost City Ramblers type accompaniment, complete with old-timey styled fiddle.

"Stray Cat Blues" is easily the best of the lot and is pure Stones. It deals with their favorite subject: naughty boys and girls. The lyrics are about a groupie and Jagger comes up with some very tough lines "I've heard you're fifteen years old/But I don't want your ID" and signs off with "I'll bet your mother don't know you can bite like that."

Musically, it is one of the songs that make use of the rhythm, tension, energy pattern mentioned earlier. The verse is in the form of one of those great *Between the Buttons* cuts, "All Sold Out." That is followed by a simple chorus. Later, a second chorus is added on top of that, ("Oh yeah, you're a stray, stray cat . . .") Each element of the structure adds to the tension of the body of the arrangement. But at the end of each chorus the energy level drops back down to that of the more restrained verse part of the song. It provides the listener with a perfect release. Instrumentally, Keith Richard's performance is again brilliant.

Beggar's Banquet is a complete album. While it does not attempt *Sgt. Pepper* type unity it manages to touch all the bases. It derives its central motive and mood from the theme of "revolution" but isn't limited to that. Over at the

Stones house there's plenty of room for groupies, doctors, jigsaw puzzles, factory girls, and broken hearts as well. Yet even these subjects are colored by the impact of "Sympathy for the Devil" and "Street Fighting Man." *Beggar's Banquet* ought to convince us all that the Stones are right. By putting all these different themes on the same album the Stones are trying to tell us that they all belong together. They do.

The art work in this album is quite nice. The center spread is a particularly appealing depiction of the Stones acting out the album's title. However, it continues to grate on me that the cover of the album is not what the Stones intended, and that the Stones were forced to abandon the one they had originally intended to use by London records. The idea that a record company executive should have the right to tell the Stones what is a suitable cover for their album is an outrage. It is typical of the Stones that they held out against the new cover for quite a while and then gave in. It just wasn't worth the continued hassle. Nonetheless, giving in doesn't solve the problem. As long as record companies are run by businessmen, artists will never achieve full control over how their art is presented to their public. There has been too much glib talk lately about the power of musicians. Unless musicians organize themselves more effectively, and unless journalists give them all the support they can, things like this will happen again and again. The First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech but it doesn't forbid a record company from censoring the artists it controls via an exclusive recording contract.

The next time New York's East Side revolutionary contingent wants to shake somebody up (besides Bill Graham) why don't they head up town to London Records. I'm sure the President of London Records could use the education.



BY ERIC FHRMANN

"Friends, the time has come—"
"You've got to do a little less talkin' and a lot more changin'."

"Got to make all those problems start becomin' solutions—"

"You've got to get out into the streets and show people where it's at."

"You've got to feel the energy inside of you!"

"You've got to get down on it . . . get down!"

"You've got to get down on it brothers and sisters!"
The overflow crowd of 1,800 at Michigan State University's Union Ballroom is up on its feet, shouting "get down" and waving the familiar "V" for victory, as Brother J. C. Crawford articulates the MC-5 gospel, a radical harangue for freedom.

"Are you ready brothers and sisters? Are you ready to make all those problems start becomin' solutions?"

"Yea!" The crowd responds.

"OK—Everybody's gettin' down . . . eatin', smokin' dope and makin' love in the streets . . . so let's kick out the jams Motherfuckers—the MC-5!"

At that instant, lead singer Rob Tyner runs onto the stage and leaps high into the air, his body writhes amidst the strobe lighting for a split second and when his feet hit the ground, the MC-5 begin to "Kick Out The Jams."

This is how the MC-5 experience starts off. From then on, hold your head because you are in for a total destroy experience.

The MC-5 are attempting to politicize and liberate the minds of our culture. This radical musical action stems from the one-dimensional automobile factory environment of their Detroit home (their name stands for Motor City Five) and it is spreading rapidly with the popularity of the band.

"Wherever we play we walk through the crowds and rap with the people on the way up to the stage . . . we tell 'em to kick out the jams and get down on it . . . everybody's gotta get down!"—Lead Guitarist Wayne Kramer, 20, born, in Detroit of a lower middle-class background—digs wearing brown Stetson Seratoga shoes with the white stitching penciled in.

"It's the high energy, man! Little Richard screamed his ass off and Chuck Berry got his split kick dance steps from Harlem tap dancers like Baby Laurence . . . ever dig him?"

"We do it our way."—Drummer Dennis Thompson, a 20-year-old pincushion for Detroit's prickly politicians. Wears only a leather vest and jeans on stage, but plays with such intensity that he takes the vest off after the first song and must have the equipment man wipe the sweat off him while playing.

"Fuck everything else man . . . just get down!"—Lead vocalist Rob Tyner, 23, lifelong Motor City inhabitant. Teases his hair and wears bench-made dancing boots—often wears mini-skirts and tights on stage. "It's all here, just get down/get down/get down!"

Rhythm guitarist Fred Smith and bass guitarist Mike Davis have also spent all of their twenty years in Detroit and are the relatively subdued members of the group. The "5" (as they prefer to be preferred to in the vernacular) got together around three years ago and began doing hard blues and R&B. They gigged around Detroit and gained a reputation as a good blues band, doing John Lee Hooker, Little Richard, Chuck Berry and their own original topical blues material.

When Uncle Russ Gibb, a radio station entrepreneur,



Wayne Kramer

opened his Grande Ballroom, he used the 5 to play on his concert dates with nationally known groups. Late in the fall of 1967, John Sinclair, who was instrumental in the development of the Detroit scene, became interested in the 5's music. Sinclair, writing for Down Beat at the time and hosting his own local TV jazz show, would rap after gigs at the Grande with Bob Tyner, who shared his interest in the free form of Sun-Ra, Pharoah Sanders, Rashid Ali and John Coltrane. A self-styled poet-philosopher, Sinclair was a close friend of the late saxophonist Coltrane. The 5's conception of blues was beginning to branch out and Sinclair's fresh conception of free form jazz created a synthesis of ideas when it met the 5's basic blues-rock roots.

"High energy is a total and environmental involvement of the musician and the audience. It happens when your senses and emotions spew themselves completely onto a medium."—John Sinclair, 26, mentor-manager of the MC-5. A native of Detroit, dropped out of college after becoming fed-up with his master's thesis, accomplished jazz trumpeter—a big shaggy-haired soft-spoken bear.

"Sure, it's a political thing, just dig the energy . . . not just white power or black power but everybody's

power. We were the only group to play up at the Battle of Chicago . . . Burroughs dug us, Genet dug us and check out what Mailer had to say in Harper's."

The singer was taking off on a galactic flight of song, halfway between the space music of Sun-Ra and "The Flight of the Bumblebee" . . . an electric caterwauling of power . . . burning it, flashing it, whirling it down some arc of consciousness, the sound screaming up to a climax of vibrations like one rocket blasting out of itself . . . it was the roar of the beast in all nihilism, electric bass and drum driving behind out of their own non-stop to the end of mind . . . as if the electro-mechanical climax of the age. —Norman Mailer, *Miami and The Siege of Chicago*.

In quest of a conducive environment, the MC-5 have found communal living to have a profound influence upon their ability to communicate and more readily share ideas. Similar examples of this benefit can be found in Traffic, the Grateful Dead and the Band (Big Pink). These groups are proving that the best creativity is not always generated when five musicians live in different places, think different things and try to gain recognition on their axes whenever they play.

"To express the total environment through music,



Dennis Thompson

the musician must break away from the ordinary everyday and put himself in a place where he can devote all his time to thinking and playing."—John Sinclair.

The 5 are a part of Sinclair's dream come true. Trans-Love Energies. A completely liberated communal environment where people can live and create. The commune was originally established in Detroit but shortly after the King assassination, police repression became so harsh (arrests, drug busts, brutality and general pigshit) that Sinclair and his fellow communards chose to move their energies into Ann Arbor, incubator of SDS and hotbed of political activism. Now the MC-5 live in an 18 room house, ironically located along Hill St. and Ann Arbor's "Fraternity Row," with about ten other individuals who contribute to Trans-Love's energies.

Next door is another large house which Trans-Love rents; another band, the UP, resides there along with fifteen additional communards. The 5 bring in most of the dust (bread, money) to pay the \$550.00 monthly rent tab for the two big houses. Trans-Love's magic light show also gathers in the dust because it generally goes along with the 5 wherever they play. Recently, the band just purchased three new panel

trucks with communal earnings. The commune is quite a successful endeavor and it welcomes anyone who wants to participate and do their thing.

Chucks live with the 5 and also provide the domestic energies to make clothing for concert wear, keep the place tidy and make some of the most destroy barbecue ribs and chicken that you can chomp on. Anyone from the area can walk in, sit down at the 30-foot long harvest table and scarf down some really destroy food, absolutely free.

One warning, the MC-5 is a unique subculture. All of the communication inside of the 5 house is game talk, which to the ordinary observer would sound like double talk . . . well brothers . . . it ain't. It's like this — to quote Brother J. C. Crawford, Exalted Preacher of Zenta International, the political arm of Trans-Love Energies:

"May I warn you, may I make it known that I warn you, the pipe of power is to be passed . . . let it be lit and let it pass, brothers and sisters . . . this is the pre-dinner toke-down, brothers and sisters, toke this scribe [meaning myself—MC-5 jargon for all writers] down into the hallowed and exalted halls of Zenta . . . let the pipe be passed and bring on the . . ."

Everyone barbarically devours the ribs and potatoes. Brother J.C. begins his gospel once more in a W. C. your friends. A little instant anarchy for you power Fields-1890's politician fashion.

"Brothers and sisters, this is the pre-after-dinner toke-down, after this toke-down comes the after-dinner toke-down and after that comes the pre-post-after-dinner toke-down and finally the post-after-dinner toke-down."

Wayne Cramer passes the pipe after puffing on it and smiles.

"Actually, you've gotta toke down to get down and in order to toke down you gotta get down and if you get down, we all get down."

"Yeah, just like Alice in Wonderland," says John Sinclair.

"We call you guys scribes 'cause that's what you are . . . we're the 5, you're the scribes," Wayne again.

During my stay we smoked one hell of a lot of dope and sat around the big table and played a game called "Objects." "Objects" is a game that the 5 invented—it involves getting stoned, sitting in a circle and having a leader who designates in what direction you pass objects (of which you must obtain two yourself). The leader can either call forward or

reverse the direction of the objects. Each fuck-up costs 15 points and a mandatory take-down regardless of the offense, be it a dumb-drop, Simon-Says reverse or grabbing the wrong object. Try it sometime with freaks.

After playing "Objects" we sat around and smoked more dope and talked very little about music. John Sinclair and the MC-5 don't care about being busted. He once gave a narc a free joint, just for kicks, thinking the pig would want to get off. That caper was his third offense for possession. It is now in the courts on appeal and a decision is pending. Sinclair is not sweating jail though. He spent his first wedding anniversary in the Wayne County Jail (Detroit) and wrote a poem for the pig that busted him:

When you have to try to arrest all the people
younger than I am who smoke marijuana every
day & don't even care at all
when you come to bust them and all they'll
do is laugh in your face,
you're so funny, you come on like someone
on your TV set . . .

If John Sinclair gets sent up the river, Detroit will burn. The city politicians know this and they still can breathe the smolderings of Summer 1966. When the police became heavy handed in the Plum Street hip community late in the Spring of 1968, the white and black militants made a pact to stick up for each other. John Sinclair was one of those cats who brought the forces together, and if he is sent to jail, Detroit will burn once again. There are more politicized hippies in Detroit and its surrounding areas who have helmets, gas masks, teargas and homemade Mace along with other ordinance paraphernalia than any other city currently in insurrection.

While the guerrillas wait in hiding, their band the MC-5 helps them get money by playing political benefit concerts. Whether it be for a bail party, rent party, fund raising benefit for Black LAW workers trying to organize their independent local or an underground paper in need of dust to continue circulation, the 5 will play.

"If you need bread or are in jail, just call us and we'll try and help the best we can . . . we know the feeling brother."

John Sinclair speaks with authority on this subject. Plum Street and the Grande Ballroom have been the two centers of activity in the Detroit area. A few of Detroit's businessmen decided to renovate a few blocks in the depressed Plum Street area as a pop culture center but it has failed terribly due to the police law and order training academy which uses Plum Street as its practice area. Now there is little left in the way of real activity, the only prosperous businesses are head shops which cater to the weekend mod-squadders who drive in on the freeways from the affluent suburbs of Grosse Pointe and Bloomfield Hills. Yet those hip people who still hustle the Plum Street area are very politicized and if the man makes the wrong move, tensions will bare as buildings burn.

The Grande Ballroom is the mecca of the Detroit rock scene. It was once the sight of stately waltzes and high-priority social affairs. Now the neighborhood has changed into a depressed area, but if you are over 17 and able to pay, you can still dance. The Grande itself is a similar scene to the old Avalon in San Francisco. It has a definite gaudy midwestern hippodrome look. Trans-Love artists provide the poster work for the national artists that owner Russ Gibb books in. Gibb has recently opened a Grande Ballroom in Cleveland and plans to co-ordinate his bookings once he gets Cleveland Grande together. Usually the ballroom is publicized in Detroit's two underground papers, the Fifth Estate and John Sinclair's SUN.

The Detroit scene has also been responsible for the S.R.C. (Scott Richard Case) now on Capitol and presently touring the country; The Amboy Dukes, who recently had the single "Journey to the Center of Your Mind" and the Stooges. The Stooges are a totally bizarre experience and will have a bizzaro-destroy impact on the music world when Elektra releases a Stooge album next spring. Also hauling from Ann Arbor, the Stooges practice macrobiotics and live on their own communal farm. Stooge Vocalist Iggy Osterberg leaps off stage into the laps of surprised girls and plays a game of Reverse-rapo, taking off his shirt, pulling down his pants, then goofing on the girl and walking away. He has the potential to make Jim Morrison look like a tame puppy. Often Iggy injures himself in his violent movements to which he comments, "Yeah, we watch a lot of TV at the house."

Iggy was once a protegee of ex-Butterfield drummer Sam Lay and is presently living in Ann Arbor with Nico.

Elektra Records caught wind of the 5 and signed them along with the Stooges to recording contracts. Elektra gave two free recording concerts at the Grande in co-operation with Trans-Love and Zenta International on October 30 & 31st. Bruce Botnik of Sunset Sound and Wally Heider were flown in to record the sessions in a portable 8-track housed in a truck.

Most important was the fact that this event marked the first time that a unique cultural form has been captured in its own midwestern environment without having to migrate to an east coast or west coast cultural center. Their album should be available shortly after the first of the year.

"We had to do it live—the whole thing is energy, audience rapport. It is no longer a question of just getting your head into the music, but letting the energy liberate every cell in your body. I guess you could say our thing is a condemnation of everything that is false and deceitful in our society."—John Sinclair. "Yeah, that's the middle class alright."—Wayne Cramer.



MAO DALENE SINCLAIR

Here is a typical MC5 program, as performed at the Grande Ballroom in Detroit. As well as serving as notes for "an evening recital of new music," this is the strongest statement so far of what MC5 is into.

BY JOHN SINCLAIR

Set the First

1. "BORDERLINE"; The NOW infamous compositions by Wayne Kramer (guitar) currently sharing sides with "Looking at You" on the MC5's latest underground killer single.

2. "UPPER EGYPT"; Inspired by the planet shaking "Tautud" album by Pharoah Sanders. (Impulse-Mono, A9138, Stereo, AC9138) Lyrics by Detroit's noted Poet/Artist/Lecturer/Dope & Sex fiend, John Sinclair. "The Pharoah of the (now defunct) Hippies." Sinclair is personal manager of MC5 Enterprises, a division of Russ Gibb Productions.

3. "STORMY MONDAY BLUES"; The MC5 always include one stone blues in their live show because they like it that way.

4. "ICE PICK SLIM (5 for Shepp)"; This original piece, dedicated to Archie Shepp, features each of the 5 in solo performance. "We wanted to do some more complex arrangements (i.e., ensemble passages & time signature changes, for those of you who are into that) & still leave everyone enough room to get

out their hot licks."

The order of solos:

1. Rob Tyner, Gronk Saxophone
2. Fred Smith, Sonic-Boom Kama-kazi guitar
3. Rob Tyner, Vocal solo
4. Wayne Kramer, Cosmic wiggle guitar
5. Michael Davis (Free Bass solo)
6. Dennis Thompson (Drums)

Ending in mass improvisation & Energy blast.

Set the Second

1. "KICK OUT THE JAMS, MOTHERFUCKER!"; An original with lyrics & music by Rob Tyner, arranged by the MC5.

2. "BAD SIGN" (Born under a . . .) written by Albert Kung, a bit of spider music.

3. "SLOW DOWN"; ROCK AND ROLL MUSIC. The subversive device used by revolutionaries to dissolve inhibitions, cause fucking in the streets give you "sickness in the mind."

4. "BALLAD TO A THIN MAN"; Off Bob Dylan's Highway 61 Revisited album, because of the obvious lyrical considerations.

5. "TUNGI" (Toon-jee) A composition from the beautiful "Coltrane" album by John Coltrane (Impulse Mono, A21; Stereo, AS21) again reaching into

other areas of sound. "We wanted to do this one because it's a song that throws a mood. A different shade of mood so we could incorporate some percussion instruments & flute. Watch for Mike Davis' Bass voicings."

6. "LOOKING AT YOU"; (The MC5's latest recording fiasco) "This one won't sound like the record, as we recorded it 4 months ago & written merely as structure and is different each time we play it. This is due to differing levels of surroundings, personal energy, chemistry, vibration, group consciousness & the amount of taking before show time."

7. "I PUT A SPELL ON YOU"; written long ago by Screaming Jay Hawkins. "A natural progression of events."

8. "COME TOGETHER"; A little spontaneous generation, written live on stage at the Grande. "It was just one of those things . . . everybody was grooving . . . Fred started this guitar thing & we all took off." It has since grown into a Mad/Filthy/Orgy-Ritual-Song of the Saly Flesh. An extension of our fucking in the streets program.

9. "I BELIEVE IT TO MY SOUL"; This is your emotional-transition song used in this position to equalize pressure/energy levels & polarize & focus group consciousness to a malleable point.

Written by Ray Charles.

10. "BLACK TO COMM"; (Song of the Planets . . .) To you, for you, about you. Since 1964, "Black to Comm" has been the culmination of the MC5's live show. It was born out of the need to go beyond rock & roll's limitations. "You keep building & building it—it evolves, it can't be held back by beat or key." The MC5's original bassist & drummer left the band 2 1/2 years ago because of this composition. "In those days it was difficult to relate to new forms. The people could dig exaggerations of existing forms, but new founding concepts were intolerable. Even today in some places we play, it often gives people an excuse to dislike us."

After the introductory structured energy chant & invocation, "Black to Comm" loses its hard-and-fast musical form, being structured around energy levels rather than meter or tonality. "At this point, we try to create the highest sound/energy levels we are capable of, using volume, muscle power, gallons of sweat & total intensity. Comm in the past was the energy of five people—but why stop at five? We found that through the addition of more instruments, such as saxophones, flutes, bells, tympani, various percussion instruments, & screaming freaks from the audience, the levels were considerably higher, if every-

one in the audience joined in we could erupt into the universe."

Once at Community Arts Auditorium, Wayne State University, we had 500 people all up on the stage with us & once at the Union Ballroom, University of Michigan, there were about 300. It was incredible! The MC5 strongly urge all free people of good will to bring their own-instruments & use their own strong voices.

"Let your Love
Come Down, Down
Down . . ."

The MC5 have been been entity for 4 years. They opened the Grande Ballroom in October of 1966 with the Chosen Few (Then comprised of members of the INCREDIBLE SRC and the EARTH SHATTERING PSYCHEDELIC STOOGES.) The MC5 are: Wayne Kramer & Fred (Sonic) Smith on Guitar ("Nobody plays lead . . . We just play . . .") Michael Davis on Bass, Dennis Thompson, Drums & Rob Tyner on harmonica, flute, theremin & lead vocal. All play saxophones, organ, piano and "Whatever else we can get our hands on."

"You've Got to Move in the Music,
Got to Get Out in the Sun
Got to Get Out of Your Head Now,
Got a Lot to be Done."

"Y' know, in every problem therein lies a solution, so if somebody'd get down, all those problems'd start becoming solutions."—Brother J.C.

"I'll take to that one."—Wayne Cramer.

"Dig John Lee's 'Motor City's Burnin'!"—Drummer Dennis.

"It's a total rebellion thing against the faye power structure . . . hero worship, the abuses of power, materialistic obsession . . . that's what we condemn . . . if you don't see it I guess you live with it."—Sinclair.

"I really try and haunt through those charred streets and dig the searing and crackling flames of the burning buildings."—Bass Guitarist Mike Davis.

Rob begins to chuckle and J.C. elbows Wayne in the ribs, everybody laughs.

"Fuck that shit man!! I really think we should have the real Screamin' Jay pop out of the coffin like on the tour . . . really do a sex thing with the crowd," says Rob, referring to "I Cast A Spell on You."

"Get down, kick out the jams," Wayne interjects. "Get down, get down or we'll take you down" J.C. jibes Wayne.

When considering the lower middle class from which the 5 emanated, it isn't difficult to understand the high energy which they put into their music. J.C. begins to explain: "The Motor City . . . dedicated to the production of the automobile—symbol of Western Man's mobility and affluence."

Gargantuan assembly lines at River Rouge discharge wastes through the bowels of the city. These wastes do not dissipate, they accumulate.

"It's all accumulating to make a machine that goofs on you two years after you sweat your ass off to buy it."

Wayne begins singing

"Everyone's a junkie, na na-na na na"

"Take this boy down."—Brother J.C.

"And then there's always Junkie Uncle Bill Burroughs."—Wayne.

What William Burroughs has done to writing, the MC-5 are doing to music. There are all into Burroughs very deeply. His LP is often heard on the Trans-Love stereo.

"Yeah, we're with Burroughs. Junkie, junkie, who's the real junkie . . . nobody knows. We're all junkies. Listen to our music—that's why we say get down and kick out the jams. Everybody's gotta shuck his junkie thing, man," says Sinclair.

Wayne forcefully adds his comments:

"Get down, get down, what about the poor dope junkie who is really hooked because he can't handle the scene . . . he gets jail man."

MC-5 sees Detroit as a personification of junkie society and themselves as the rejection of this society through high energy environmental experience.

"People really get uptight if you tell them they don't have to work and hack the straight world. They say . . . well, what would we do. They don't know how to read, they don't know how to listen to music and they don't know how to touch each other."—John Sinclair.

"Sure, lots of folks will say that we are un-music . . . but what kind of junkies are they?"—Dennis Thompson.

"When the 5 is playin' and everybody's down . . . there ain't no junkies!"—Brother J.C.

When the MC-5 plays, everyone participates. Musicians hop on stage to wait with their axes and there is always a free microphone. When the 5 played a benefit for The Paper at Michigan State, one dude came up and beat drummer Dennis Thompson's ride cymbal for five minutes and had to be helped off stage. Thompson is as powerful as Ginger Baker, but with a different motive. Baker is playing to prove that he is the Cream of rock drummers . . . and it looks as if he is killing himself in the process. Dennis Thompson is playing with such fierceness because he has, along with the rest of the 5, experienced twenty years of repression in the middle class rut. He says this with every pulsation of the band.

"Now, we don't think we're obscene," says Wayne.

"Just go down town Detroit and look at the books they sell . . . all about success and workin' hard and that bullshit."—Brother J.C.

"So far, we've never been busted for obscenity, but as we get around, some ego-tripping pigs will make some kind of scene just like the Doors had in New Haven."—John Sinclair.

"I really don't know what obscene means . . . the only people that talk about it are the freaks and they are the ones that are the most obscene things going."—Rob Tyner.

At first meeting the 5 come on somewhat aloof, and since I was a scribe, there was a short period of feeling each other out. Brother J. C. eased the communication gap and when the pipe began to pass, we really got into things. The gaming and double talk is great amusement for themselves and their friends. That is all they do aside from their political music. Their subculture is very tight and if one does something, the others are fraternally obliged to follow suit. When they practice a new song, everyone takes part, not just one guy doing the lyrics and another doing the music.

"It's everybody's thing, we all do it and if we all didn't do it, we wouldn't be."—Wayne Cramer.

"Sure, the Frisco groups really had a good thing with the crowds . . . so what happens when they start touring? They make Frisco the in place for everyone to go. It's a nice place, but cats keep shuckin' their own places and cop off to the coasts because they heard somebody good from Frisco or New York. They lose all their energy this way by removing themselves so they can't react to their own scene, but a brand new manufactured scene."—John Sinclair.

Wayne comments: "Yeah—if people split from




Michael Davis

heir . . . yeah they split so where is it at, where is all the energy . . . they leave it at home. Get down! Is it gonna keep happening like this or is it gonna happen like the 5 by gettin' down and kickin' out the jams motherfuckers?"

Wayne gets toked down, of course.

Narc busts are an inconvenience to all of us, but few rock bands have actually *reveled* in them the way MC-5 does. Here's MC-5 publicist-etc. John Sinclair's account of a bust in mid-1968—as it appeared in an MC-5 publicity *handout*. The scene was the Grosse Pointe Hideout, an east-side teen dance joint, and MC-5 drummer Dennis Thompson and manager John Sinclair stepped outside during the second set for a smoke and met some fans in the parking lot next to the building. The young rock and roll addicts produced some grass, and while the sacrament was being ingested two rent-a-cops strolled on the scene, surprising one young man with a joint in his hand.

The two associate pigs called their big brothers, the Harper Woods police, who appeared on the scene 30 minutes later to see ten freaks lounging against some cars under the watchful eye of the hired guards. Questioning followed, and the 10 were told that they'd be taken into 'the station' and booked on marijuana charges. Sinclair asked that the rest of the band be informed of this development, which was done, and band members Wayne Kramer, Rob Tyner, Michael Davis, and Fred Smith, along with equipment manager Ron Levine, immediately burst upon the scene woofing at the cops and demanding an explanation, causing enough confusion that those in the assembled company who were holding the sacrament could secrete it from the police. Then the real shit went down.

Levine hassled the police until he was sure that subtle persuasion wouldn't work (resulting in one cop pushing Fred Smith in the chest and threatening him with a whupping) and then returned to the club, turned on the p.a., and informed the eager MC-5 fans that Sinclair and Thompson were getting popped in the parking lot and that the only way they'd get to hear the band would be to surround the cops outside and *make them* give the two men up. While Levine was rapping the club's manager had a cop drag him off the stage and then closed the doors, trapping the kids inside. He was sufficiently shook up, however, to persuade the pigs to release all the suspects except the one who was caught with the dope and the two under-17 'juveniles,' who were taken in and released later to the custody of their parents. By this time Kramer was on the phone contacting LEMAR (Legalize Marijuana) attorney Bill Segesta, and Sinclair and Thompson were threatening the clumsy suburban police with false-arrest suits and extra-legal retaliation.

"When the band, intact once again, returned inside to play their first set, the crowd went into a spontaneous scream scene to welcome them back to reality. And when Tyner kicked off the first tune with his customary 'Kick out the jams, motherfucker' it was like a Rolling Stones concert," and so on.

It's the kind of press release that would give a Hollywood flack an instant stroke. But MC-5 occupies another universe, another sensibility, where narcs are figures of fun.

From the cross-section of people observed at the Union Ballroom at Michigan State, it seems all kinds of people dig the MC-5. A straight fraternity type with a crested blazer commented:

"Jeez, they sure are crazy, but their music really gets to me . . . it is really hard for me to identify with anything after hearing this."

A quiet little girl with long auburn braids lamented: "I'm so useless, what will happen to me when the revolution comes. They have so much energy. I'll never do anything."

An olive drab fatigue-clad black nodded his head and said, "Got to burn some things baby."

What is so exciting about the MC-5, according to Sinclair, is that "the whole thing is very blues and R&B oriented . . . but we've taken our own energies and exposed them to 'Trane and Sun-Ra and Pharoah . . . you can't predict it . . . either can we."

"The music had a certainty which went through gangs and groups and rabble, tourists and consecrated saints, vestal virgins with finger bells, through sullen Negroes . . . noise so near to the transcendencies of some of their own noise when the whine of gears cohabited with the pot to hang them out there on the highway singing with steel and gasoline, yeah, steel and gasoline exactly equal to flesh plus hate and blood hate."—Norman Mailer

Wayne adds, "That's right, we cut all through the bullshit."

"You feel the music. The bass notes vibrate in your chest cavity while the treble seek out your sinuses. It is in your meat . . . not of it."—Sinclair.

There is a little bit of something for everybody in the 5 . . . if you dig Little Richard, they've got "Tutti-Frutti" . . . if you dig Screamin' Jay Hawkins, they "Cast A Spell On You" . . . if you dig Chuck Berry, they do his moves and if you dig freaky clothing, they've got lots of it that you'll never see any place else because they make it themselves. If you are a girl and you dig sex, you might even get one of them (or all of them) to ball you (depending on how much you like Hubert Selby backseat ball scenes). There is no telling what will happen when the 5 hit the stage . . . just as there's no telling what will happen when you get down and kick out the jams. You may start putting the make on the girl next to you, or you may go out and blow up your local draft board. If you dig cheap thrills, you'll never get more for your money. Go to their house, eat their food, smoke their dope and play their games. Their games are your games, and we all play games!

"The general cultural values in this country have evolved to a stage where they have to do entirely with jobs and products. If you don't have a job, you aren't a human being."—John Sinclair.

The MC-5 are individuals with common upbringing that makes them a bit clannish. Playing games and poking fun at the outside world appears to be their forte and Sinclair handles most of the gut decisions as their mentor-manager. They realize they have unique forum as a voice of liberation, but they are really humble cats. Their goal is to turn people on in whatever way they can.

The 5 are condemning society and anyone who is plugged in to its system and they are a bit skeptical of themselves as they stand on the brink of success. "It's nice that this is happening but if it didn't happen we'd be doin' the same thing . . . no different," says Wayne.

"As long as we move people, we'll be doin' what we want to do. As long as they get down and kick, we'll be happy."—Dennis.

A young service station attendant in East Lansing, Michigan, upon being asked directions to where the 5 were playing:

"Shit, y'know all my buddies made me work tonite, while they're all at the Union, diggin' the MC-5 . . . they all think they're getting revolutionized but I control the gaspumps that fill the molotov cocktails!"

If you hear of some notoriously freaky band coming to your town with a trail of policemen, narcs, freaks and guerillas, it'll be the MC-5 . . . don't just sit and watch—KICK OUT THE JAMS!



Rob Tyner

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Taj Mahal



BARON WOLMAN

BY TOM NOLAN

"What I'm afraid of," says Taj Mahal, watching the sun set on Sunset, "are these closet fascists, the guy workin' unloadin' trucks scared to death that some Negro is going to take his job, an' you know he votes for Wallace. You know, what some of us are doing here in California, our step forward, is unique to our position and condition. And it comes as a slap in the face to a lot of people. Hell, just go over here a few miles to Orange County and you'll see a whole other thing, those kids over there aren't like these kids over here."

Taj is sitting on the terrace of the Old World, his favorite restaurant. In a week he will be going to England, invited by the Rolling Stones to be in their television special. At about the same time his second Columbia album, *The Natch'l Blues*, will be released. The combination of these two events will probably, eventually, make him a star.

Not that the first album was not worthy of the honor; it is a good one, it has spontaneity and the consequent excitement. It was made in all-night sessions in Studio 3 at Columbia Records, Sunset and Vine, just down the hall from where two years ago a group called the Rising Sons (Taj Mahal—guitar and vocal) were recording an eagerly-awaited album that would, it was said, help define the blues revolution.

The story circulated of the midnight visitor sitting in the shadows, finally coming over after listening for hours—it was Bob Dylan, he thought the Rising Sons were outsize. But that album was never released, and all that came of the Rising Sons was a shared bill

at the Trip with those temptin' Temptations, whose fans surveyed this—integrated—blues group—with no understanding and great distaste; and an appearance on the Tonight Show which fell through when Johnny ran out of time; and a disastrous single of "Candy Man."

And now Taj was back, two years later, making his own album at two o'clock in the morning, with David Robinson the producer running around in his sock-feet, telling the drummer to tighten up the heads for "that Memphis ash-can thung," telling Taj to use a pickup on his harp, and Taj saying, "No man, that don't git it, that ain't the sound—." Swigging down from a bottle of white Mexican wine, getting ready for take twenty-three—it was all being done live, "none of that goin' in and overdubbing something you did two weeks ago. Yes, yes—like to see the glue right there on the floor!"

And when the cut was finally down, Taj loping in for the playback, a huge grinning man when he wants to be. (He also has this thing he does with his face every once in a while, he pulls it down in a stony monolithic stare, head thrust forward on the neck, looking like the grossest caricature of a "coon" ever printed in a 1927 Redbook Magazine; he does it on purpose. It's like he does everything on purpose.)

"I'll never forget—one time," he says. "Sleepy John Estes and Yank Rachel come over to my house; over to my house! I phoned up Ry Cooder and I said, 'Ry, there's a couple friends of yours over here.' Nothin', you know, gets him up and at 'em. 'Sleepy John and Yank Rachel?' 'What!' he says, 'wait a

minute!' And he hangs up, and he's over at my place like *that*—we just sat there for hours and hours and played, played the blues, John and Yank, on my front porch, all that fine music. I was very happy, I tell ya friends. And proud."

It seemed back then that all Taj Mahal wanted was to play the blues, the music he claimed (and who could dispute?) as his. "Some people think you have to be Blind Lester Crawdad and come up the river from New Orleans and into Chicago to cut two sides, the Man hears it, says 'Pretty good, give us the publishing and we'll see what we can do!'—they think you have to go through that to play good blues. But, you know, it's not indigenous to a time or place, the music is indigenous to the people. Now, I could play a tune just exactly like Robert Johnson, but what would be the point of that? This is 1968, not 1926."

Then he could take out his guitar, turn on a beaten-up amp, and like Segovia barely touching the strings, sound exactly like Robert Johnson—now Muddy Waters—now Howlin' Wolf. "Hey, do you know this one? Hey do you know how old this song is—thirty years old! Those older guys . . . they know. This is the music I feel at home with. It's not, you know, four kids who grew up together in Long Beach and say let's grow our hair long and play rock and roll. Play everything and respect nothing; that don't work."

Play the music was the message then. "Blues-rock-gospel-country-funk. Screamin' and singin'. See, all this talk about things is dumb and depressin'. It's like Shakespeare, they take him and have big discussions about him and bounce him off satellites around the world—but he wasn't written for some old stage with air-conditioning, all of that. He was written for the . . . common people, you know, you and me, man, that's what it's about. That's really what it's about."

Some things have happened since that first album. He played gigs; he was at Newport, and Billboard called it a "personal triumph," whatever that meant. Taj really is a fine performer, watching him on the stage, the hat on his head, the sheriff's star pinned to his vest, you can see, what it is they say, star quality—everything he does, the way he moves, gets into a song, kicks it on out, cups the mike against his harp in a giant hand, his aw-shucks-but-lissen-to-thus glee introducing an Elmore James tune—he talks like that, mouthing big round syllables.

"He's certainly got that sex thing down," one girl tells me, "better than Hendrix ever did." And what after all is that, but being the essence of the horn actor who gets joy from walking, turning to open a door, the sheer act of living life, and thus delights his watchers. He does it because it's his job, and he does it because he loves it, so he gets the best of both worlds; maybe that's what is meant by a "personal triumph."

And the second album was made; if it is more restrained, it is also more refined, cooler, clean and neat, with more thought to production and variety. There is even an Otis staple, "You Don't Miss Your Water," Stax brass and all, a sure-bet smash single, with another of the same in the last track, "Lot of Love," which should make the album something of a monster, which should make the first album sell as well, and Taj Mahal will be a household word.



Taj himself is a little different now, he has had some of the taste of success. He eats at the Old World because he is a vegetarian; the Old World is just up the street from the Whiskey, which he will play in a few days, a large step up from folk clubs. The host at the Old World calls him "young man" as he summons a waiter to bring a menu to the terrace table where Taj Mahal sits, wearing his Amish cowboy hat with the band made of beer-can pop-tops, his guitar in the battered black case by his side.

His tone is different now. The message is still play the music; but talk, if still depressing, is no longer avoided. He is somber this afternoon, angry, bitter even. He has allowed his character—even in the sense of a part played—to flower; elements at least latent have come to the fore, there is more after all—as logic would suspect—than a satisfied music-maker in this twenty-six-year-old black who went from Harlem to Amherst University and a B.A., and then came to California and decided to make his living playing blues.

"You have a system where Wilson Pickett—Wilson Pickett, an established artist—has to struggle to get each hit, has to prove himself with every record. Now how do they expect you to respect a system like that?"

When the salad he ordered has come, an enormous bowlful of lettuce, tomatoes, beans, avocado, he pours the vinegar and oil over it and mixes and devours it, the fork looking small—and his hamhock hands huge, his long fingers bejeweled with rings.

"All those people, you see, they have nothing, they have nothing to live for. Can you imagine how some of those people feel? How would you like to be fifty years old and find out that you still can't get your shit together? You know, would you want your father to be Barton Lytton?"

A young woman in a plush car stops at the light, and Taj looks at her for the duration with a friendly half-smile, which she stonily ignores, driving away with an angry belch of exhaust. "The broads in this town," he says, "are so dumb."

"And I have seen the same mistakes going right on, perpetrated by people who have supposedly had their consciousness expanded. When you're hit in the leg with an arrow, what's the first thing you have to do? You have to get the arrow out of there, right? And then you have to rest so the leg can heal. And then

But this now, this album—What's on it? Just me playing peaceful. And lovingly."

A young man walks by on the sidewalk beside the terrace, nods at the chick with the natural—"Crazy, baby!"—he is wearing Beverly Hills hipster clothes and a semi-crewcut, and he walks by Taj with a "Hey man, too much, what's happening?" Taj watches him turn the corner, shakes his head and sucks a tooth. "A real loser," he says. He pauses a minute.

"You see, there has to be another way, there has to be another way, it is not meant for each generation to go off to war, that is not the way it's supposed to be, but you can't even talk to these people, they're saying, 'But the United States has been fighting wars for hundreds of years' and—oh, 'Defense is such a large part of our budget'—they actually think like that."

His salad finished, the check delivered, he fishes out his wallet. "And how many of those men out there do you think are getting good and *true* loving from their wives? Not a whole lot, man, not very many. Otherwise why would they have all those articles in the Readers Digest: 'All About the Pill.' And 'Five Ways to Get Your Husband to Stay Home More.' Every fucking issue, man!" He checks the bill again, digs deeper in the wallet.

"Confidentially I'm not that worried about myself, you know, but I can't see much hope of too many other people gettin' their shit together. Hmmm, it looks pretty slim." He has come up with three singles.

"Gonna be slim. Guess I can write a personal check. But then, I'll have to . . ." He looks off in the distance down the street—". . . go out to the car to get the checkbook. But, that's okay, yeah, that's what I'll do, that'll be better for me anyway. I just wish the music business wasn't run on promises, this'll be done next week and then you can have the money, and meanwhile you're tellin' everybody you owe the money to please be patient, then when somethin' comes up and that thing isn't done next week you have to tell some story to them, and . . . Such—a—drag."

The next public performance of Taj Mahal and his band after they play the Whiskey is at L.A. High. Presumably, the people with the most chance of getting their shit together are the young folks, and Taj Mahal decided to give some concerts by way of illustrating the blues to high school students, Negro students in

skin fringe jacket beads bell rings red neckerchief spectacle shades and cowboy hat—carries a funky guitar—well, this boy here, he's all right, yeah!

"We gon' get it together," he says, nodding. He's going to tell them about the blues, he explains, an old music, and he starts with a field chant, telling them to clap along; it's a little ragged at first, but then he doubles the time and they start right up in a Staples Singer rhythm—chica-chi-chonk!! chonk! and he's got 'em hooked, when they finish somebody yells "Amen amen tell me Taj," and even though as he brings the blues up from Africa through the fields and "The Celebrated Walkin' Blues"—"Thus the truth I'm singin'"—it gets a little restless again, it's only temporary, he brings them back around when the band comes out, Eddie with black Cherokee hair to his shoulders. That whole audience lets out a whoop for him, and the band starts the city blues, "Checkin' Up On My Baby."

By now a white girl and a colored girl against the wall in the wings start dancing, barefoot, working it out.

"Maybe you can't dance now," Taj tells the audience, "but you sure can move your legs!"

"Oh, sock it to me!" a girl yells out, and Taj and the band play "Conna," starting out low and funky, getting louder for three choruses, climbing that hill, then bringing it back down soft, the house is clapping like mad now, the band brings it back up again, building, Taj playing his *finest* harp, everybody's with them, all together now, schoolbells ringing, girls screaming at the last few bars—"Here's a song written by a man who runs a music store in Memphis, 'Whole Lotta Lovin,' and that's what we all need in our lives, we gotta try and get that, a lotta lovin'—feeling—emotion!"

That's it, no doubt about it, this band is wailing, sounds like two saxophones and three brass from Memphis coming out those guitar amps—and when the number is over and the hour is up and the curtain falls, those kids are still shouting; he's made it. As he sits in a folding chair backstage and explains the blues into a KABC radio-news mike ("These men, supposed to be illiterate, Robert Johnson—a fine poet; Sleepy John Estes—a fine poet!"), kids are trooping back for autographs. He signs them on top of the National case—"This is called a National, yes, it's about . . . mmmm, fifty-five years old, they don't even make 'em any more."



you have to learn to walk again. But—these white kids who play the blues. The new generation. Play it and play it and play it and play it. They don't understand, but they're doing the same thing as their fathers did, all those other generations, but on a whole other level. They're takin' somebody else's thing, their music, and using it. Now I'm not against someone who plays and plays and plays until he finally gets down to where the real him gets in touch with it and he can play what's inside of him finally; it's the people who never do that, who just use somebody else's music, never give any credit, never create anything of their own."

Two friends of Taj's, a chick with a natural and a guy with a camera, drive by in a Mustang and wave. A few minutes later they appear on the terrace, the chick sitting down at a table and the guy starting to take pictures of Taj as he talks.

"Now this album," Taj is saying, "is a real mind blower. Listen, let me tell you the way to enjoy this record. When you get it, don't play it, wait till you've had a really hard day, the hardest day you've ever had, you're miserable, nothin' went right for you, you just can't wait to get home; so you go home, take a shower, smoke some weed, and then put the record on, and listen to the whole thing and I guarantee it'll straighten some things out in your head."

"Man, it's so beautiful, and everything is in there, all the rhythms of life—talking, making music, trains, horseback riding. Everything. The first album was—good, it was a little rushed, but it was honest, it was one man standin' up front and playin' what was inside."



particular—somebody should teach them roots, and it's not going to be Roy Wilkins—and the first lecture-concert is scheduled for a Monday morning at L.A. High, which is located just a few minutes from Wilshire Boulevard, in a fairly middle-class area. The student body is about sixty per cent black, twenty per cent white and twenty per cent oriental, and Taj with his band is to explain the blues to over half of them. By ten o'clock they are beginning to overflow the auditorium.

"The last time we had a crowd like this," a girl backstage says looking out at the audience, "they chased the guy off the stage with tangieres." She looks at the equipment being set up, "Taj Mahal" stenciled in white spray paint on the amp cases.

"Who are these guys, 'the Mahals'?" And Taj has arrived, pulling up outside in a green Porsche with Eddie Davis, his Cherokee lead guitar, and Eddie's wife and their child—"I ain't been this nervous since the prom," Taj says, taking out "Miss National" from its case, a really battered case, the black imitation alligator leather peeling off in big hunks to show the wood underneath—the student body president up front saying to maybe a thousand kids, "Will the assembly please come to order. Will the assembly—"

A thousand kids moving around, squirming, yelling hello across the aisles; but it seems there is no need to worry, for when the voice says, "To educate us in the blues—Taj Mahal" and the curtains part and Taj walks out, slow enough, just sort of lankin' out there, a six-foot-four-inch frame, and they see this dude, righteous, black boots brown tapered bellbottoms buck-

A faculty member is shaking the man from Columbia's hand and thanking him three separate times, and a girl takes her autograph and leans down and gives Taj a kiss on the mouth, while he returns, and smiles, embarrassed—my, my!—and her friend says in approval, "Man, you were clean! You were—too—clean!"

"Man, did you see them when the band walked out? They just fell apart, bla-voom!" Taj says to the Columbia man later, driving in the blue Mustang back to town: "They are so ready, this is the audience man, this is the audience for the Chambers Brothers, for us—there's about a million kids out there. It's the same thing that was happening when they brought Leadbelly up, that same trip!"

"And you can reach them. They can't relate to Muddy Waters, you know, getting up there with the process job, the shiny suit, the rings—"

"Well now, well now," Taj says. "If I could rap with 'em for a while, not to excuse, but to explain, then I think maybe, they could get turned on to him."

"Well Taj," the Columbia man says tapping his knee, "you're gonna turn them on to him," and Taj shakes his head and sucks in his breath and half-smiles all at once—"You got a smoke?"

The Columbia man reaches in his jacket for cigarettes. "You know, in a few months, you won't be able to do something like this, man. Not without police all around you."

Taj is leaning back, stretched out in the bucket seat and looking out the window. "You know," he says. "That don't sound at all real to me."

PERSPECTIVES: IT AIN'T REALLY FUNNY

BY RALPH J. GLEASON

Justice is incidental to law and order
—J. Edgar Hoover

The really important question before us is not what the next Beatles album will be like or will they appear in the U.S. again nor is it when Bob Dylan will come out from the woods of Woodstock and sing to us.

The real question is whether or not the decayed, blind, reactionary forces of the dying civilization will be able to hold off the New Generation, like Hitler's army in Russia behind hedgehog defenses, long enough to brainwash enough of its offspring to keep the freedom of art from expanding.

No entrenched group ever gives up its privileges willingly. England didn't retire from India, she was forced out, though without bloodshed.

This is a real thing. A very real danger to everyone. It doesn't take much exploration of the United States to realize that, extensive as the New Wave is, there are more people out there in the boones than are covered in our philosophy, O my brothers. You have only to watch the Johnny Carson show and the Merv Griffin show and the Joey Bishop show to realize that the freedom implied in all the new music is really feared and hated by the Elders of the Tribe and that more respect is given to a Sonny Bono, the Arch Schlep of All America, for his anti-drug crusade (translated it means anti-grass) than to Lennon and McCartney seriously talking about their very real change of mind about the Maharishi.

Even though the commercials assume the superficial coloring of the New Wave more and more as time goes on (dig the one for hair oil that utilizes a guru and a couple of hippies), do we seriously think they endorse what the new music stands for? Peter, Paul & Mary had a point when they sang that line about having to hide the meaning. On the one hand "they" will permit it if it makes enough money but on the other they fight it. And never forget the saying is that you "take the money and run like a thief."

In recent months a number of interesting things have happened, in addition to simultaneous raids for grass in all parts of California. I don't think that it is all the result of a grand conference of the powers of reaction, but I do think it is an instinctive, Pavlovian reaction by the power structure, to use a rather faded phrase which describes a very real thing.

The Quicksilver Messenger Service checked into its

New York hotel, the same one Richard Nixon was staying at. The rooms had been reserved and guaranteed by Capitol Records. Once the long hair of John Cipollina and the rest was right there in the lobby, the rooms became unavailable.

In Sacramento, Calif., the capitol city of the State, the Sound Factory was totally unable to get a permit to hold dances. It just could not be granted. Instead they had to ban dancing and operate under a permit to hold "lectures and concerts." But no dancing!

In San Jose, Calif., the police department did not refuse to issue a dance permit but the operator was told unofficially after he announced a schedule of weekly dances, by a member of the city's vice squad, that he could count on continual heat to put him out of business.

The trade association of managers of arenas around the country issues a newsletter which blacklists groups who deviate from the norm. Jefferson Airplane was blacklisted, not in so many words, but the effect was the same, for inciting people to dance at a Fresno affair.

The Seattle Center has added a clause to its contract which, in effect, turns the show over to the police. When questioned as to why, since there never has been any trouble, they answered "we want to keep our perfect record." (In Viet Nam a U.S. Marine officer earlier this year discussed how they fired on anything that moved on the opposite bank of the river).

Last Spring the various groups in Monterey who were opposed to the Pops Festival returning emphasized the "problems" although there had been no problem the previous year. Dope was sold openly on the fairgrounds, they alleged. Even though people in favor of the Pops Festival continually pointed out that the allegation, if true, implied a dereliction of duty on the part of the Monterey Police Chief who had sent his troops home early because all was so quiet and had called a press conference to so announce, they never got an answer.

In San Francisco, the Family Dog may or may not get its dance permit back. Righteous Elders testified before the Permit Appeals Board that hippies did unspeakable things outside and inside the hall. A City narc testified to the drug traffic he had observed (but had not acted upon!) within the hall

Logic is useless. Everyone should be in bed by nine, the neanderthal chairman of the Appeals Board announced as he spun out on his ego trip and made jokes.

This society fears its young people deeply and desperately and does all that it can to train those it can control in its own image. Watch the way the cops club striking students. Not only those at the Chicago demonstrations, but those in Newark and San Jose and San Francisco and anywhere else they dare to dissent. The cops love to hit them. Anyone who has been face to face with the fuzz knows the blind hatred, the comments to the long haired girls, the rest of it.

Penis envy is expressed at the end of a billyclub. Paging Dr. Freud. Blacks en masse and long haired youth en masse equate with trouble. The cop says "Move." You ask "why?" and he hits you and arrests you for failure to disperse and resisting arrest. And they talk about law and order but they never mention justice.

A street vendor is arrested for selling the issue of ROLLING STONE with John and Yoko naked. This is a threat? To what? What are the dark crimes that are the direct result of gazing upon the picture of a naked man and a woman? Who is moved to action? Only the cops and the Elders of the Tribe, baby, everyone else is too busy or else expecting rain.

If you knew nothing of the truth and heard only the testimony of the Elders condemning the Family Dog dances, you would construct in your head a picture of lines of hippies standing in the street outside the Avalon Ballroom all pissing blithely on the sidewalk. Not even in the gutter.

It is hard to kill the truth, but it has been done before. Bits of it keep popping out and that's the hope. When CBS News showed the Puppet Emperor of San Francisco State ripping the cords to the sound system atop a truck at the entrance to the campus, the world heard loud and clear a youthful voice telling it like it is. "Get off the truck, you fucking fascist!" the voice cried out.

Fascism is an ugly word, especially regarding those who masquerade as educators. These are times of troubles. The TV ads say "turn on" and the audiences laugh at the pot jokes on the Smothers Brothers and at "I Love You Alive B. Toklas." But it ain't really funny. Not at all.

Wonderwall by
George Harrison



BY RITCHIE YORKE

Jose Feliciano sat stiffly on a wooden stool in the middle of sun-bathed Detroit Stadium, his burgundy suit almost gaudy below the glint of his dark glasses. In the stands, World Series spectators lit cigarettes, bit their nails, read programs, munched hot dogs—most of them unaware of Jose's presence.

Fifty-three thousand baseball fans, impatiently waiting for the Tigers and Cardinals to lock horns.

The TV cameras zoomed to Feliciano. For a tedious moment, network and viewers poised for the start of the "Star Spangled Banner," the national anthem which has become such a ritual now that the original intent of it—as a display of patriotic fervor—is all but forgotten.

"I was really afraid," Jose recalls. "I didn't know whether to begin the song or what. But once I got into it, I lost my fear. Actually, it was the second most frightening experience of my life. The first was meeting a girl."

Jose seeped into his Spanish soul version of the national anthem, complete with an affectionate "yeah-yeah" at end. There were a few boos at Jose's unique interpretation of the song, but generally the fans were more interested in Tiger Mickey Lolich's opening pitch than any possible desecration of the national anthem. In fact, many observers didn't even notice Feliciano doing his thing with the "Banner."

The rumpus came next day, when, as Jose observes, "the syndicated press blew the event sky high." Overnight, via AP and UPI, Jose became a household word—revered by free spirits, detested by the ever-sensitive middle class.

Newspapers were swamped with letters condemning the 23-year-old blind Puerto Rican who'd come to the States 18 years earlier. A typical comment came from the wife of a famous comedian, who lives near the Felicianos in Newport Beach. She told a dress store owner where Jose's wife, Hilda, also shops. "Frankly, he's just a crass little upstart. It's just a thing of the moment. In a year, nobody will remember who he was. Besides that, he's a goddam immigrant!"

From being just another kid with just another hot single and album, Jose emerged as a must-see with the curiosity seekers who make up middle class America.

They might have been unhappy with this "crass little upstart" but they came to see him by the hundreds—at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles, and anywhere else he was playing. Came to see this immigrant kid doing his thing with the national anthem, and they've kept on coming.

Was it a simple publicity stunt designed to hype Jose into the Big Money night club league? Was the purpose to light a fire to America's already simmering reaction to recent radical action in the streets? Hasn't Jose any respect for the sacred anthem?

Yes and no. His manager, Sid Garriss (an ex-Detroit DJ, who also handles Anthony Quinn and Robert Culp), received the word that Ernie Harwell of the Tigers was looking for someone to sing the "Star Spangled Banner" to lead off the World Series.

Usually the chore is performed by a local celebrity, like the manager's wife or a school teacher. (Once Robert Goulet did the honors but forgot the words.)

"Jose is a mad baseball fan," says Garriss, who resembles Bing Crosby, pipe and all, "and I figured it was an excellent chance for him to attend his first World Series game, and also to get a little publicity at the same time. The game's watched by hundreds of millions of people around the world," he added, glint in eye.

"When I signed Jose, he sang the 'Star Spangled Banner' for me, and it was really way out. I figured if we could bring him into mainstream a little, he could do it in style, with respect."

Hilda Feliciano recalls: "Jose said, 'Oh christ, I'll ruin my career if I do it my way.' But he desperately wanted to go to the game, and eventually we decided he could do the song reasonably straight, without compromising too much. 'To thine own self, be true,' is our motto."

"Sure I expected some kind of reaction," Garriss says matter-of-factly, "but hell, nothing like what happened. Nobody was prepared for that."

Least of all RCA Victor, Jose's record label. Nobody from the company's A & R department was on hand to tape Jose's soulful reading of the anthem. The only available tape was NBC's air check videotape of the entire telecast.

JOSE FELICIANO



Two days after the game, acetates of Feliciano's "Star Spangled Banner" were moving fast on the streets of New York at \$3 a copy. RCA hurriedly contacted NBC and rushed out a single, taken straight from the videotape. It hit big.

Imagine: the national anthem on the pop charts. (Perhaps now the Beatles will revive "God Save the Queen," Gordon Lightfoot "Oh Canada," the Bee Gees "Waltzing Matilda.")

It wasn't the first time an artist had been slaughtered by the public for tangling with the "Banner." Back in wartime 1941, when Hans Kindler introduced a stream-lined Stravinsky harmonization and choral setting in Baltimore, the audience actually booed. Yet while distinguished musicians (and few will doubt Jose is just that) are criticized for artistically interpreting the song, every day thousands of school children, teachers and general public sing it off key and no one complains.

"They said I sang it off key, that I don't know how to play guitar, and one woman even wrote saying she didn't mind classical guitarists, but when a long haired hippie started doing the song, she was nauseated," Jose says, more amused than uptight.

"I did the song the way I feel it. It was honest. It wasn't just a publicity stunt. I didn't have any idea what would happen. Aretha Franklin souled the song at the Democratic Convention, so I figured there wouldn't be much of a fuss. Now I open all my U.S. gigs with Banner. I like the song. I love my country, and I see no reason why I shouldn't do it." Although Jose's expenses were paid by the Tigers, he lost \$60 on a bet he made with Garriss.

Jose, short, stocky and good looking, with thick black hair, has been blind since birth. He came to New York 18 years ago, and started playing guitar at about the same time.

"I really didn't know what would become of me," Jose mused, stretched out in the spacious back seat of a black Cadillac limousine, fighting its way out of downtown, peak hour Toronto. "I thought I'd be spending my life making brooms, mops, chairs and things. That's fine for some blind people, but I wanted something more out of life. Music seemed the best way."

"The fact I'm blind has been a great help to my career. If I'd been sighted I'd have played baseball and got into trouble like all other kids on my block. "Actually, being blind is not so bad. If

you're born this way, you never know anything else and you don't wonder about it. Though I'd hate to have lost my sight after being able to see," he said, without the slightest self pity.

Lifting his glistening brown brogue boots over his seeing eye dog, Trudy, Jose said "These roads are very smooth." The engine droned over the open highway to London, Ontario.

Hilda, an attractive and sprightly brunette, is Jose's wife, business manager and alter ego. To her, everything to do with Jose is "we." "We" have a new record. She feels part of Jose, and he doesn't discourage her. Both came from families of eight children, both were born in Puerto Rico just 34 miles apart.

But they met later at a Greenwich Village coffee house, run by Hilda. They were married five years ago, just after Jose started the club grind which took him all over America. The general public was still many records and many concerts and many letdowns away.

RCA Victor signed him, and cut several albums for the Spanish South American market, where Jose was always popular. But nothing happened Stateside. Victor believed in him, but the wrong people were assigned to producing his discs.

"I'd arrive at the studio," Jose recalls grumpily, "and some old cat would say, 'OK Jose, let's do a folk rock album today, or a country, or a rock album.' I never had the chance to be myself. They wouldn't respect my judgment."

"It became so bad we threatened to leave. We stopped doing English albums, and only cut Spanish product because Victor had no say in what we did or how we did it."

Eventually, he signed with Sid Garriss, who renegotiated his Victor contract, so Feliciano had some say in what was done. Rick Jarrard was his new A & R man, and it clicked right away. "We didn't need to say a word. He knew what I wanted to do, and he knew how to put it down on tape. And it worked out right," he added, as a sort of conversational exclamation mark.

"Rick played me the Doors' 'Light My Fire' when we were listening to album material and suggested we slow it down and do it with soul. So we put down one track with my vocal and guitar, then another with bass and conga drums. Rick added some special string arrangements, and a flautist improvising. A West Coast DJ picked up the song and played it, and soon there was enough momentum

for the song to be pulled off the original album, and released as a single. It moved slowly, but it got there," he said, lifting his legs onto the seat, and putting his head in Hilda's lap.

Hilda ran her fingers through his hair: "He's become much easier to live with since he made it," she said, "Jose was determined to get there and he was so let down when it took so long."

"He'd sit there saying nothing and suddenly come out with something like, 'Why isn't anybody helping me? I don't have a hit record. Yet, I heard today John X has a hit, and what a schmuck he is.' I'd tell him to cool it and wait, and he'd get mad and say 'I don't think you care whether I make it or not.'"

The Felicianos have 400 birds, 22 talking parrots, six chinchillas—all pregnant—four Doberman puppies, and three big dogs, including Trudy, Jose's seeing eye dog, to keep them occupied. They both eat too much and compensate by dieting a lot. And Jose loves telling corny jokes. Over dinner, Jose rattled forth a diverse section of his aged yucka. ("What wears a turban and rides a brown pig? Lawrence of Poland.")

Most of his jokes are aimed at other ethnic groups, such as Poles, Negroes and Italians. ("How do you tell an Italian airplane? It has hair under its wings.")

Later, in the dressing room of London's cold and damp hockey stadium, Jose worried about the temperature. "If it's too cold, I won't be able to move on the fretboard," he moaned to Hilda. Over a thousand people shivered in winter coats in the stands and on the chairs placed on wooden boards over the ice. London's 200,000 people are not renowned for musical awareness, but when Jose was led onto the stage by Hilda, and placed on the stool in front of the two mikes, a clear rapport was established.

Backed up by Paulinho on drums, Efrem Ligeira on congas and Robert Kindel on bass, Jose really got to grips with the tunes of the times. First Tommy Tucker's "High Heel Sneakers," which he belted along a melodious highway. Then came "Phoenix," an instrumental rendition of "Love Is Blue," "Goin' Out of My Head," "Daytripper," "Younger Generation," "Satisfaction," "California Dreamin'," music from *Zorba the Greek* and *Black Orpheus*.

The applause built and grew in dimensions, the chill forgotten. It was the best thing they'd seen in London since the Centennial train went through. Jose sat on his stool as he's always done, rocking to the rhythm he was putting down, sightless eyes staring straight into the blinding purple spotlights, singing soul.

The cue song "Goin' to Chicago" finished, and out trundled Hilda and Trudy, and Jose stood up and bowed, long and low. They screamed themselves hoarse. The trio returned, and Jose once again climbed onto the stool, and you knew what it was going to be, and it was. "... you know that it would be untrue ..."

Another standing ovation. Once again, Jose had lit the audience's fire, and was feeling kind of warm himself.

Later we listened to the big Cadillac's radio and talked of singers and influences, as the highway hummed beneath us. "I guess I'm in the soul bag," he said, as Hilda got more and more involved in her book of West Indian supernaturalism. "I like putting meat ... feeling ... myself into songs. I suppose I'm an actor's singer. I like to feel a personal involvement in the lyrics."

"Ray Charles influenced me. On guitar, West Montgomery was great inspiration. I also dig Stevie Wonder—whew, can that kid play the harmonica. Aretha's very good. Simon and Garfunkel are unbelievable."

As for future material, "I'm definitely doing 'Hey Jude.' I've cut 'Sunshine of Your Love' for the next album. And I'm going to do 'Walk On By.'"

"Abraham Martin and John" came on the radio. "Jeez, I wish I'd recorded that song first," Jose said, and then, "Hey, don't those jocks who talk over records give you a pain in the ass?"

"I think that for a guy my age, I've done really well," Jose said, getting back into the ever-present bag of nuts and sweets.

"And we're gonna move into a new house soon," said Hilda, "and we'll electrify the fences, because some of the fans are too much."

"I wanna get a seeing eye lion, so that nobody will be game to refuse us admittance anywhere," Jose grinned.

BOOKS

Hell's Angels by Hunter S. Thompson, Ballantine Books, 348 pp., 95c.

Freewheelin' Frank by Frank Reynolds as told to Michael McClure, Grove Press, 160 pp., \$5.00.

BY JOHN GRISSIM, JR

"Filthy Huns. Breeding like rats in California and spreading east. Listen for the roar of the Harleys. You will hear it in the distance like thunder. And then, wafting in on the breeze, will come the scent of dried blood, semen and human grease . . . the noise will grow louder and then they will appear, on the west horizon, eyes bugged and bloodshot, foam on the lips, chewing some rooty essence smuggled in from a foreign jungle . . . they will ravish your women, loot your liquor stores and humiliate your mayor on a bench in a village square."

Fantastic! Yet this is an apocalyptic vision of the Hell's Angels motorcycle gang that rings with gospel truth in the ears of thousands of decent citizens in California's backwater communities. They may not have been visited by these motorized legions of Satan, but by God they've read about them in the papers. In fact the press has had such a field day with the Angels since they first outraged public morals in 1964 that today the Angel stereotype has supplanted the spectre of dope crazed communist Chinese to become America's number one Bogeyman.

Somewhere within the mountains of copy churned out for the mass media, the truth about the Hell's Angels was victimized by the blue pencils of countless editors attuned to the sanguinary tastes of the reading public. It is largely the task of Hunter Thompson's "strange and terrible saga" and Frank Reynolds' rough hewn yet lyrical autobiography to put into clear focus the real character of the Hell's Angels. Each attempts to explain a bizarre and puzzling phenomenon, yet falls just short of achievement. But taken together their perspectives compensate for any shortcomings and provide a fascinating and coherent description of an outlaw motorcycle gang whose exploits have been strangely elevated to the level of folk history.

Hell's Angels is a journalistic collage of incidents and insights culled from innumerable parties, clashes with the law, week end runs, bloody stompings, gang bangs, and conversations with Angels of every stripe. The narrative is straight out of the men's magazines whose covers invariably picture sex-starved SS officers preparing to defile American beauties in various stages of undress. The report is interspersed with a wide variety of historical and literary quotations which occasionally undermine the author's effective prose style.

Thompson, who is 28, first met the Angels in an Oakland bar in 1964 and won their confidence by writing an objective story on motorcycle gangs for *THE NATION*. Though he never became a member of the Angels, he rode with them, drank with them and generally stayed in close for a year and a half. Then one night several members kicked the shit out of him in a bar, not out of any long standing animosity but probably because of some half-articulated sense that he still had options, that he wasn't a loser. Thompson is constantly aware of the core force of the loser image on the Angel character. It emerges as the first cause, the prime mover.

The author traces the roots of the Angels back to post-war Southern California, where thousands of combat hardened GI's struggled to rejoin the civilian world. Some never made the transition and instead joined motorcycle gangs which often numbered 150 cyclists on weekend runs to the hinterland. A pack would storm into a rural community, tie up all the traffic, and proceed to take over the local bar, terrorize the populace with boisterous public behavior and generally raise hell.

One such incident in 1947 involved over 3,000 cyclists and inspired Stanley Kramer's *The Wild One*—a quasi-documentary about an inarticulate motorcycle gang leader (Marlon Brando) with a misplaced sense of justice. Overnight Brando became the mumbling idol of millions and the hitherto unknown "Angels of San Berdo" (San Bernardino) became folk heroes. But the image soured in subsequent years as the Angels, constantly harassed by police throughout the state, dwindled to a membership of less than 75.



FREEWHEELIN FRANK

By the early Sixties they were still few in number but they had become well known in California for their celebrated runs to obscure upstate resort areas. The typical Angel was a grizzled drifter with long scraggly hair, knuckles scarred from bar brawls, wearing cycle boots, levis caked in grease, excrement, and yes, even semen, with a sleeveless denim jacket on the back of which was emblazoned "Hell's Angels" above a winged death's head. The dirtier he was the more class he had. He had a reputation for beating up cops, drug abuse, assorted sex crimes, and for riding a souped-up, chopped down Harley Davidson motorcycle better than anyone else on wheels.

Yet in 1964 this paragon of evil had yet to invite the attention of the national press, at least not until an Angel Labor Day run to Monterey ended in the alleged gang rape of two teenagers who were reportedly surrounded while cooking weenies on the beach. That did it. The Angels had suddenly made it big. Thompson reports they owed most of their success "to a curious rape mania that rides on the shoulder of American journalism like some jeering, masturbating raven. Nothing grabs an editor's eye like a good rape."

It makes no difference that the rape charges were eventually dropped when it came to light that the two teenagers were closer to 21, that they had spent several hours whooping it up with the Angels in a bar and that they very probably followed the Angels to the beach to take on a few of the boys. Suddenly the Hell's Angels were besieged by magazines, free lance writers, photographers, newsmen, and Hollywood producers. Membership soared, the gang suddenly had an image to live up to, and droves of psychiatrists and university eggheads rushed to their typewriters to ponder the motorcycle as locomotor phallus. California's attorney general released a 15-page report on past Angel history, replete with the most sensational descriptions of wanton and perverted behavior. The gang's implied homosexual activity (later discounted) only added more fuel to the fire. Thompson adds:

"The secret queer factor gave the press an element of strange whimsy to mix in with the rape reports, and the outlaws themselves were relegated to new nadirs of sordid fascination. More than ever before, they were wreathed in an aura of violent and erotic mystery . . . brawling satyrs, ready to attempt congress with any living thing, and in any orifice."

At one point a TV network asked the Angels for the destination of their next run in order to have cameras on location to witness the carnage. The Angels countered with an offer, at \$100 apiece, to terrorize any town the network selected. It must have been well nigh irresistible—guaranteed footage of rape and pillage. But reason prevailed and the idea was dropped.

Without glorifying either the Angels or their victims, Thompson recounts his own experiences with the gang. Though he does not hesitate to call them outlaws and hoodlums, he devotes consid-

erable effort in describing the background and make-up of the typical Angels club. He accompanies the Oakland chapter on the 1966 run to Bass Lake under the glare of national publicity, follows it to numerous parties at novelist Ken Kesey's La Honda home, and documents its run-ins with Berkeley's student activists whose anti-war march was unceremoniously halted when two members single-handedly took on 5,000 marchers. The latter confrontation ironically led to the Angels' acceptance by the Berkeley cultural. Thompson has a field day:

"They were big, dirty and titillating . . . unlike the Beatles, who were small, clean and much too popular to be fashionable."

He recalls being asked by numerous hosts to invite the Angels to parties in their homes in the Berkeley hills, most of which Thompson declined:

"Such parties would be guaranteed trouble: heaping tubs of beer, wild music and several dozen young girls looking for excitement while their husbands and varied escorts wanted to talk about 'alienation' and 'a generation in revolt.' Even a half dozen Angels would have quickly reduced the scene to an intolerable common denominator: Who will get fucked?"

On the whole Thompson does ample justice to his subject, despite his failure to really get inside the character of the Angels. While his descriptions of their behavior are profuse, they nevertheless have a superficial quality to them, making it difficult to draw any firm conclusions.

Occasionally he gets a little too cute with his one-line quotations: "Better to reign in hell than serve in Heaven—John Milton." Get it? The same holds for the narrative:

"An outlaw whose hog won't leap off like a thunderbolt feels a real stigma. It has the same effect as . . . an actor blowing a key line: 'To be or not to be . . . quoth the raven.'"

But these shortcomings are minimal. Thompson has done a great service in writing of his experience. Above all he has managed to inform while being consistently entertaining.

If *Hell's Angels* emphasizes the saga side of the gang at the expense of insights into the character of individual members, *Freewheelin' Frank* reverses the relationship by providing a near verbatim account of Frank Reynolds' life and times as the secretary of the "Frusco chapter."

Over a three month period in the fall of 1966, Reynolds spent a great deal of time talking to poet/playwright Michael McClure who faithfully transcribed the interview on tape. McClure avoided tampering with the lengthy monologue as much as possible, thus preserving Reynolds' untutored yet richly expressive language.

The book is an autobiographical portrait of an Angel whose allegiance to the gang is the central focus of an outlaw life. His friendships, his life style, his whole world revolves around his total involvement with the Angels. Reynolds' descriptions of weekend runs, parties, assorted beatings and other me-

morabilia parallel those of Thompson. Yet superimposed on his accounts is a mystical, strangely religious point of view which derives not only from a natural inclination to such things but Reynolds' frequent use of LSD as well.

This fantastic and visionary mood prevails throughout the book, a freewheeling eschatology which continually blows the minds of every head in the chapter:

"Every person is based on Love, Fortune or Fame. In the future, mankind will be controlled by men with love instincts. Men of Fortune and Fame will soon reach an end to their existence. I believe that I will see this in my lifetime. We have a patch that we wear, initialed AFFA. It means Angels Forever Forever Angels."

Though the heavy emphasis on the drug experience prevents the reader from getting the full story on the Angels, it is nonetheless an effective key to Reynolds' character. LSD has forced a re-appraisal of his attitudes and in the process of articulating his beliefs, Reynolds emerges as a clearly likable, warm person.

The ruthlessness with which Reynolds pursues raw pleasure is tempered with a kind of primitive honor and manliness. At a party the night before he is to begin a six month jail sentence, Reynolds pulls a young woman away from her date, slams her onto a bed in a locked room and takes her for the first time in her life. Though he is not gentle his unselfishness calms her fear. The act of rape becomes an act of love. The scene is beautiful.

His early memories of his younger sister—like himself a product of reform school upbringing—are lyrical and profound.

"In that foggy afternoon in the years of ten, eleven and twelve is that old gray deserted grandstand where all the baseball players had left behind their Mudville echo and nobody would go but us to give rundowns and rendition of the times we would parlay, though we had minds of just a few words we did get 'em down and we got across in a double thousand-year old scene of man and woman."

His narrative is full of faulty syntax, halting prose, and delightful descriptions:

"One night Lovely Larry, I and Chocolate George boarded the bus in the darkness of the trees, with this girl of magnetic beauty like really natural. Her long blonde hair did meet attraction in Larry's eyes as well as all of us."

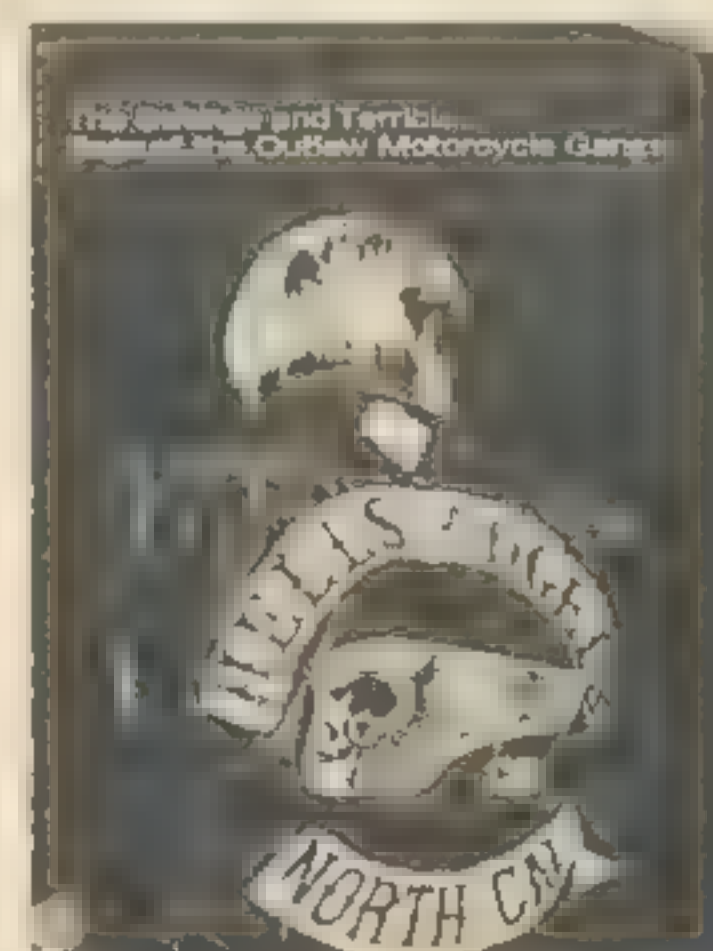
As a companion piece to Thompson's book, *Freewheelin' Frank* brings the whole phenomenon into a clear perspective. The former is a look at losers as hoodlums, the latter a portrait of the loser as a human being.

The Hell's Angels have learned to live with the image, even thrive on the public's weird and erotic fascination for their fatalism.

As one Angel once replied when asked if he was a loser:

"Yeah, I guess I am. But you're looking at one loser whose going to make a hell of a scene on the way out."

Without directly stating the case, both books offer convincing arguments that America as a nation, and California as a state of mind, need an institution such as the Hell's Angels. The gang and its members are magnificent objects onto which millions can project their most delicious fantasies. They embody the primordial energies of brute force, the excremental vision, and the freedom of the outcast. They are magnificent incarnations of the beast in all of us.



Random Notes

—Continued from Page 6

Lucy, a solid body Gibson guitar given to him by Eric Clapton; "What's the New Mary Jane," a John Lennon number, naturally, generally described as a lot of laughter, singing, raucous instrumental work and good times—no doubt, also two other songs: "Polythene Pan" and "Maxwell's Silver Hammer."

These are not the only songs the Beatles have in the can. George Harrison's "All Across the Universe," left over from the time of "Lady Madonna," is still unreleased, although it was once planned for a multi-artist charity benefit LP to be released in England. Additionally, there still exists a tape of two concerts the Beatles did at the Hollywood Bowl in August of 1965. The concerts were taped with all the technical facilities of the nearby Capitol Records, the sessions being supervised by George Martin. The tapes are supposed to be of high quality, with 12 songs in all.

It would be a stone gas to see this released on record.

Up against the wall, Motherfucker, or I'll blow yer mind! Four patrolmen and one tactical unit cop in Kansas City have formed a rock band called The Enforcers in an attempt to bridge the Fuzz Gap. It is not known whether they plan to perform the new George Harrison composition "Piggies."

Have you been digging the changing image of Motown? They're going hip and they're going black power. Diana Ross and the Supremes are now appearing in natural hair styles and semi-African dresses. At a recent Royal Command performance in London, Diana paid tribute to Martin Luther King, with a "there's a place for all of us," statement, the sort we keep hearing from Hubert Humphrey, Richard Nixon, et al. Very daring stuff.

Arthur Brown, Crazy World of, who is "the God of Hell-Fire" and just folks, does some far-out things with his record player. We quote from his bio, as prepared by the esteemed image corporation, Rogers, Cowan & Brenner, about what goes down when Arthur's "lounge-ing with the hi-fi high": Mothers of Invention, Doors, Beatles, and "maybe Schopenhauer." Wonder how they get the needle to track across the pages? Whatever the case, there are two versions of why the Crazy World of . . . cancelled out a good part of his West Coast tour, (a) Arthur hurt himself playing with fire at the start of his act recently, and (b) advance ticket sales were lousy. It begins to appear that you can travel only so far on jive voodoo and flaming headdresses.

Incidental Intelligence, Dep't: William F. Buckley, the noted conservative, white-power publisher of the National Review, debator and general right winger, owns 66% of a broadcasting company that just purchased radio station KYOK in Houston, Texas. KYOK is Houston's "The Super Soul Power Station." . . . Bing Crosby is getting the message, and has just returned to the recording studio to make records of the following songs: "Hey Jude," "Those Were The Days," "Little Green Apples," "The Straight Life" and others. . . . And yes, even Doris Day. Her son, Terry Melcher, will be producing her for his Equinox Records label.

Vox guitars and amplifiers are generally rated as poor to miserable equipment by musicians. The Beatles first used them, at the beginning of their careers, because they were the only large concert hall amps available. The Beatle endorsement of the product made Vox millions.

This is all by way of saying that the manufacturers of Vox equipment cancelled all their subscriptions to our publication because of the photo we printed of John and Yoko. They sent all the copies of it back with a demand to stop the subscriptions. Remember that the next time you are buying equipment.

WHEW!

Whew. Richie Havens' own ultimate expression, encompassing all meaning, all knowing. A characteristic of his live concerts. Practically a copyrighted part of his personality.

Whew. The only word to describe the creative energy, the consummate effort expended in the preparation and production of this awesome new 2-record album.

Whew. The only word that sums up the reaction to "Richard P Havens, 1983"—long awaited and available at last on

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Merry Christmas

We are all citizens of one world, we are all of one blood. To hate a man because he was born in another country, because he speaks a different language, or because he takes a different view on this subject or that, is a great folly. Desist, I implore you, for we are all equally human . . . Let us have but one end in view, the welfare of humanity.
Give a damn.

Billy Smith



CINEMA

Weekend, Jean-Luc Godard, (Evergreen Films)

BY JOHN LUCE

It is hardly surprising that many of us find conscious or unconscious ways to shut out the horror. Unable to deal with the violence of our times, we erect psychic screens to filter out the world's brutality, or become so satiated with it we cannot react.

It is fortunate some true artists feel compelled to remind us both of our apathy and the reasons for it. Such an artist is the French film-maker Jean-Luc Godard, whom one critic has called "the conscience of the younger generation." Unlike his Hollywood counterparts, Godard does not exploit violence to titillate his audiences. His films, episodic and almost academic in their cold, analytic style, are intentionally disturbing documentaries of our troubled times.

Godard never allows us to get involved with his characters to the point of catharsis; instead, he films his cameras as well as his actors and maintains a distance between the movie screen and its spectators, showing us so much brutality and human indifference that we eventually gag on it. He apparently believes that only such an approach can shock us back into awareness of the realities we try to avoid.

Godard first achieved popularity in this country with *Breathless*, a film in black and white depicting the barren existence of a small-time Parisian hoodlum, played by Jean-Paul Belmondo, who emulates Humphrey Bogart and kills with the nonchalance Bogart is famous for. Driving down the highway in a stolen car, a cigarette dangling from his lips, he is stopped by a policeman, draws a pistol and coolly guns his adversary down. He then returns to Paris, picks up a young American lover, Jean Seberg, and has a brief affair until she turns him in to the police. At the end of the film, Belmondo lies bleeding to death on the street as Seberg, without evident compassion or genuine interest, looks on.

After *Breathless*, Godard escalated his attack on the apathy of the French middle class and became preoccupied with the problems of revolutionary youth in bourgeois society. In *Masculine/Feminine*, he focused on a young radical, portrayed by Jean-Pierre L aud, who spends most of the film trying to sleep with a vain teenage pop singer who lives with her girl friends in a cramped Paris apartment. After leading Jean-Pierre through a series of bizarre and threatening experiences, the girl becomes a commercial success and moves to a more expensive apartment. Jean-Pierre visits her there, walks to the balcony, steps backward and falls to the street below. Looking as unconcerned as Jean Seberg in *Breathless*, the singer reports her lover's death to her friends and the film suddenly ends.

Godard's next major international film, *La Chinoise*, was released immediately prior to the student riots that swept France last year. Filmed in stark, almost antiseptic color, it tells of a young girl who sets up a Maoist cell in a Paris apartment owned by her wealthy family. She and her friends, who include Jean-Pierre L aud, stay indoors all day, schooling one another in guerrilla warfare, reading from the "little red book" of Chairman Mao, participating in self-conscious interviews in front of Godard's cameras and trying to justify violence in terms of abstract political philosophy. Other than disinterest, hate is the only emotion they show; by the time they have assassinated an innocent bystander mistaken for a visiting diplomat, most film audiences were thoroughly prepared for the idle, dilettantish savagery which colored the Paris student revolt.

Weekend, Godard's latest color film, opens where both *Masculine/Feminine* and *La Chinoise* end—in an expensive high-rise Paris apartment. Here we are introduced to Corinne and Roland, a wealthy bourgeois couple who live only for extramarital affairs and whatever pleasure and possessions money can buy. As the film opens, Corinne and her lover are standing on the balcony, discussing Roland's death, while he sits in his bedroom and plots his wife's murder with his mistress over the phone. The mistress wants Roland to kill Corinne immediately, but he tells her they will have to wait until his wife's sick father dies

and she can collect her inheritance. As they talk, Godard's cameras pan to the courtyard below where two men are almost killing one another over a bashed headlight.

Godard then cuts to a dimly-lit office where Corinne, stripped down to bra and panties, is reporting her latest erotic adventures to an analyst. With little feeling, she describes an incredible scene in which she has made love to both members of a newly-married couple. When she finishes her story, the analyst asks, "Is this true—or just a bad dream?" "I don't know," Corinne responds. The analyst looks at her casually. "I love you, Corinne," he says without passion; "Come on, excite me."

This episode is followed by a "Scene From the Life in Paris," which takes place in the courtyard outside Corinne and Roland's apartment. The couple is preparing to drive off in their Facel convertible to Corinne's parents' home in the rural town of Oinville, but before they leave the parking lot, Roland backs into a woman's car and has to fight off her obnoxious son. He hits the boy, sprays paint on the woman and roars away, just as the woman's husband arrives, firing at him with a shotgun.

Corinne and Roland eventually escape from "civilization," only to run into a monumental traffic jam on a two-lane highway. They try to pass several cars, but are not allowed back in line. So they drive further, past dozens of wrecked automobiles and bloody corpses, until they finally pull off the main road and into a small country town, where Corinne calls her parents to explain their delay.

Back on the road again, Corinne and Roland stop during a rainstorm beside still another battered automobile, where a girl is hitchhiking. After inspecting her legs, Roland beckons the girl into his convertible. As she climbs in, her boyfriend appears, brandishes a pistol and commandeers the vehicle. He introduces himself as "the Son of God and Alexander Dumas," explains that he plays God "because I have no ambition" and offers to perform a miracle if Roland will take him to London.

"Can I have a hotel on Miami Beach?" Roland asks. "Could I become a real bonde?" chimes in Corinne; "could I have a weekend with James Bond?" "God" looks at them; "Is that really all you want?" he asks. "You assholes don't deserve a miracle."

Corinne and Roland next encounter a poet who recites from notes taped to his costume and an ethereal girl named Miss Bronte. They ask directions to Oinville, but are answered with fragments of verse from the poet and syllogisms from his companion. At this point, Roland throws up his hands and says, "this is some hell of a movie; all you meet are sick people." "You didn't have to take the part," Corinne adds.

Roland shrugs, asks directions again and gets furious when he is not answered. He chases the poet off, sets fire to Miss Bronte's skirt and watches as she falls to the ground, burning like one of the martyred monks of Saigon. "Don't worry," he says to Corinne, "they're only fictional characters." "Then why is she crying?" Corinne asks.

In attempting to get on to Oinville, Corinne and Roland hitch a ride on a garbage truck. The crew consists of a black African and white Algerian, who force the two to collect trash cans for them and then lecture them about the "Third World."

After the lecture, Corinne and Roland continue on their way and eventually reach Oinville, almost a week late. They learn that her father, whom they have been slowly poisoning for five years, has died, and they rush to Corinne's mother's home to bargain for the inheritance. However, the old woman has decided not to support them any longer. Roland takes off his scarf and strangles her while Corinne hacks away at the body with a butcher knife. Meanwhile, a skinned rabbit the woman has been carrying is washed with thick, red blood in front of the cameras.

They disguise their crime by rigging an absurd collision between an airplane and an automobile, stuffing her mother inside and setting the mess on fire. Then, fifty million francs richer, they set off for Versailles, court of the pre-revolutionary French monarchs, and stop along the way to steal lunch from a family picnicking quietly by the side of the road. Several hippie guerrillas suddenly appear, carrying guns. They gather up the food, torch the family car, machine-gun the mother and convey her husband and teenage daughter and Corinne and Roland away.

The captives are led to a camp in the forest, where the hippies live like modern-day Indians. When they arrive, one of the long-haired savages contacts another tribe by short-wave, while the "Chief" sits in a clearing and beats monotonously on an expensive set of rock drums. Corinne and Roland learn that the guerrilla band customarily rapes, then eats, the victims of its forays into "civilization." They watch as an older member of the tribe, his butcher's coat dripping blood, orders the teenage daughter to strip, stuffs her womb with eggs and a fish, and cuts her up for the evening meal.

Weekend continues with several more episodes, each given a title recalling one of the periods of the French revolutionary calendar. Corinne becomes a member of the tribe but is almost bartered off by the Chief to another guerrilla leader in the ruins of a French farmhouse apparently bombed during World War II. However, just as the Chief is trading Corinne for another girl, a gunfight ensues. The girl is killed; the Chief reclaims Corinne. At the conclusion of the film, they sit together in the forest, feasting off a slaughtered pig, several "English tourists in a Rolls Royce" and Roland's remains.

As we leave Corinne and her new provider in their forest home, we are so satiated with bloodshed, horror and human indifference we can accept almost anything the film-maker has in store. Like Corinne, we have survived scenes of slide-splitting humor and almost unbearable tragedy and know not whether to laugh or cry. We are as indifferent as Godard's bourgeois mannikins, numb to violence and incapable of dealing with a world gone mad.

Weekend is rich in historical meaning and symbolic themes, and Godard lovers and readers not put off by this review will gain much from several viewings of the film. This writer was most intrigued by the conclusion of *Weekend*, where Godard shows the collapse of bourgeois society and the rise of the hippie guerrilla regime. Taken as an allegory, this regression from "civilization" to savagery is an ironic reversal on the idea of social progress described during the "garbage truck" episode earlier in the film. Godard's hippies are not noble troglodytes or innocent children of nature; like the Yippies and many of the young revolutionaries of today, they are sadistic barbarians, even more depraved than the middle class off which they quite literally feed. If civilization has advanced since the formation of Indian tribes, as Engels believed, it has apparently returned to a state of primitive barbarism.

This is a strong statement. Few people would deny that the dark vision bears considerable resemblance to our contemporary reality. In fact, the French hippies, or *Weekend* are not unlike the young people in this country today who emulate Che Guevara and consider terrorism necessary to fulfill revolutionary goals. This point is well worth making, and it is only unfortunate that Godard weakens his case in the film by over-indulging in violence and cinematic trickery, and too often by lecturing instead of entertaining his audiences. There are simply too many car wrecks in *Weekend*, too much blood on the road from Paris to Oinville. While many viewers will not know whether to laugh or cry by the end of the film, others will already have left the theater, bored.

However, the writer is also anxious to see Godard's next film which, according to the San Francisco Chronicle, he started shooting in November on a rooftop in New York City. Called *An American Movie*, it will feature five ten-minute ad-lib sequences spoken by Black Panther Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver, the Jefferson Airplane (which will compose a special score), a white New Left leader as yet unnamed, a ten-year-old Negro girl and a Wall Street broker. These will be followed by five more ten-minute sequences in which professional actors and actresses will recreate what the speakers say and do.

Godard has refused to discuss the movie, but it is certain to be an investigation of American violence and a continuation of the themes of his previous films. His one comment on the choice of participants was: "the Jefferson Airplane is the only rock group in the world that is me." This is not a surprising statement, for the Airplane is probably the coldest, most abstract and "cerebral" big-name group in rock today. Grace Slick, Marty Balin and crew could help make *An American Movie* Godard's most chilling film.

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CLAMBER ROCK group needs utility reed man, clarinet, flute, sax, also keyboard, harp, desirable. Also female vocalist who plays other instruments, particularly violin. Jan Tange—285-3577, San Francisco.

BLUES GUITARIST (lead and rhythm) and singer looking for solid gig, or will form blues group with bass, drums, piano. Have equipment, ideas. Rick—731-0096, San Francisco.

FRENCH LEAD guitarist drowning in blues (4 yrs. exp.) recruiting professional musicians to form band ("Blue Snow") in Vancouver. Need singer (harp) electric piano or walking rhythm, drums, good bottom bass—must be over 18, own good equipment. Stephan—762-6148, San Francisco.

SINGER, FEMALE, 23, experienced—seeks gig with working blues/rock group. Free to travel. Kathy—(617) 868-0373, Boston.

BASS GUITARIST and drummer need help. Willing to work. Heavy.—(419) 546-8673, Cleveland.

MUSICIAN, 18—write for tape. If you're a professional, maybe we can help each other. Ed Hoos—165 Chapel Hill Drive, Battle Creek, Michigan.

MULTITALENTED KEYBOARD player with experience in many bands seeks work with good creative group of any kind. Lance—776-6796, San Francisco.

ORGAN, PIANIST needed for group. Must have heavy equipment. Place to stay if problem. Chris—WE 8 9452, 663 7863, or Chris—D 8 8122, 1230 N. Ogden, Los Angeles.

HEAVY DRUMMER—18 yrs., digs Blue Cheer and Who. Own equipment. Going to School. Leave message with Diane—731-0323, San Francisco.

HENDRIX STYLE lead guitarist, lead singer with good voice, good organist wanted for established group. 15 to 21 own equipment. Also wanted leads, rhythms, bassists, organists and drummers. Chicago and Wisconsin areas, write M & Z Rock Factory—1636 S. Ridge-way Ave., Chicago.

DRUMMER, JAZZ and rock background, seeks work with better than average group. Pete—776-6796, San Francisco.

LEAD GUITAR, drums needed for blues/jazz/rock band. Must have no hangups other than a desperate need to play. Burt—(212) 222-8177, New York.

EXPERIENCED DRUMMER, college student, wants to form band to play weekends and eventually work toward record contract. D.G. Cream, Beatles, Who, Stones, Hendrix. Ron—686-5191 (after 6 00), New York.

DEPRESSED DRUMMER seeks fellow musicians. Country—blues? Robert Weakley Room 222 (come by late) 664 South University Blvd., Norman, Oklahoma.

SAXOPHONIST SEEKS work. Rocking tenor, ptychedic soprano and funky flute. Reads, fakes; mature and experienced. John—334-4281, San Francisco.

SINGER FOR 7 1/2 years, had contract with London Records. Can recoup contract when I get together with other musicians—digs blues and other sounds. Can play bass. Dennis Molloy—BE 2-3565, 1662 Cropsey Ave., Brooklyn.

DRUMMER, PEDAL, steel guitar needed to try something new (and old too). Rick—922-3750, or John—621-0766, San Francisco.

BASSIST, JAZZ & rock background, looking for band-musicians. Dig all creative sounds. Tom—453-7271, San Francisco.

BLUES GROUP needs bassman & organist. Contact R. Price—64 D Parkway Apts., Cherry Hill, NJ.

LEAD GUITARIST and/or bass needed—must be very creative. Procol Harum/Earth Opera sound. During Xmas, Jan and summer call David Bass—821 3012, Cincinnati. Other times—Shiner College, Mt. Carroll, ILL (which is near enough to Chicago).

DRUMMER, 20, plenty recording exp. Ideas rampant full time group, brotherhood good hands, good head. Anywhere. Jamie—696-1836, 39 Richmond Road, West Chester, Pa.

DRUMMER SEEKS position in jazz, rock or blues band. Union member 454-5616 Fairfax.

DRUMMER, 15, looking to form or join group. RH 4-1210, New York.

RHYTHM GUITARIST, vocals, blues oriented, own equipment, 21. Will join or form group. Tom Thomsen—863-1160, 927 Haight Street, San Francisco.

CONQUEROO NEEDS intelligent experienced drummer. Minimum two years working with groups. Rare opportunity. Call Family Dog office. Bob Simmons or Gary Scanlan—346-0756 or 282-5706, San Francisco.

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Traffic (United Artists UAS 6776)

Traffic is a group that excels at everything except getting it together. This has been evident not only from the drawn out personnel and touring problems they have had, but also from their records—excruciatingly good in terms of *real* music—but frustratingly plagued with a severe case of what could only be called "loose-endism."

It is difficult to say that there is anything wrong with them or their two records, including their newest, other than that. Every criterion you could think up, they meet—material, performance, creativity, vocals, production, mixing, etc., etc.—yet . . . Living in a cottage in Berkshire may be fun, but it hasn't done what 710 Ashbury did for the Grateful Dead nor what Big Pink did for the Band.

Their new record is a large improvement on their previous LP, the United States version of which you could fairly say was butchered by whoever handles those things at United Artists. (Having decided that they hold one of the potentially hottest acts in the new rock and roll scene, United Artists has put more of a push behind the new LP, and allowed for a nice eight-page insert in the package, but when it gets back down to it, here's what producer Jimmy Miller says in his liner notes to the LP: "And the UA man still thinks that some underground DJ should write the liner notes. It's all a shame!")

To the music: it's superb. Dave Mason is a top-notch rock and roll composer and the Steve Winwood/Jim Capaldi team is equally good. Winwood and Capaldi have a perfect understanding of each other's groove, coming up with material on a level with the Young Rascals' best work. On top of this, they have stunning command of their instruments and voices and the capability of bringing it off in new and fresh ways.

"You Can All Join In" is one of those opening, get-in-the-groove, numbers. It's a fun, very bouncy, and yet a hard Dave Mason number—good tune, good lyrics. Steve's guitar playing is not worth noting for a technical exercise, but he has a superb gift of phrasing and understanding of notes. Mason brings a gift for a very hip naivete to his lyric and his melody. Doing the child-like approach in a very heavy musical setting is what gives this such power as a piece of material. "Pearly Queen," is a Steve Winwood showcase—he does practically everything except the drums, including bass, lead guitar, organ and vocals. "I brought a sequined suit from a pearly queen." Such English country mysterious! Tremendously effective mixing in the two bridges, where the quick movement from channel to channel imitates the rhythms of the guitar, all of it ending up in the phantom middle speaker.

Their ability as musicians with any material is phenomenal. One mustn't overlook Chris Wood who is always drifting around somewhere in the middle or on the side with the best sax and flute to be heard in a contemporary rock and roll setting. In fact, Chris Wood is the only musician in the contemporary scene who has added a not-often-used instrument to the group effort in any consistently strong way.

The problem is that although they can each write material in the style of the others, they never form together a single performing and composing unit. Mason does his songs; Winwood does Winwood songs. The performance is Traffic; never the material.

What makes this especially sad is that we may never really hear or see what this combination is capable of. They'll break up first. What makes it so potentially good is that Mason is a gifted

writer and Winwood demonstrates tune and time again his agility and ability with material that is not R&B in its inception or orientation. He is fully capable of bringing all the technique, style and energy he has learned from soul music to original material in another vein.

"Dear Mr. Fantasy" was an example of that; all the songs on this new LP ("40,000 Headmen" and "Pearly Queen") point in that direction. His piano and bass figures on "Vagabond Virgin" are excellent; the way Wood's doodling on the flute and Mason's Spanish rock rhythm fit right in is the new combination at work. Capaldi keeps time like Al Jackson.

After Traffic, in their full four man version, returned from their recent one-weekend tour of the States, Dave Mason left and the remaining three went right into the studios. Maybe this will be the answer.

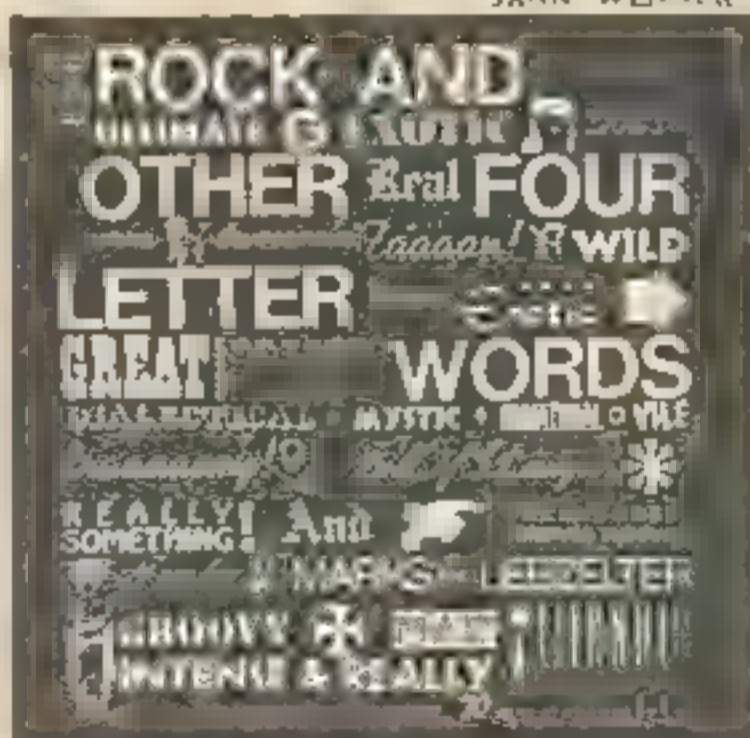
Steve's vocal talent is, as always, overwhelming. He has matured, and his approach is no longer that of the 17 year-old Ray Charles, but his own powerfully realized original style, shifting easily and dramatically from the sing-songy slow material to the grooving up-tempo passages, such as those on "40,000 Headmen." His vocal transmits the power of his message because he never really cuts loose when he gets into the fast stuff, always holding that edge of restraint on it so that the listener must propel himself forward.

I would like to hear Steve doing the vocal instead of Dave's song "Crying to Be Heard." It would have given it that last little push so that we would have a great whole Traffic piece. The refrains must have been unconsciously written for Steve: "'Cause there's somebody crying to be heard, and there's also someone who hears every word." This would have been that new combination that would fulfill the promise of Traffic.

It would be pretty obvious and a bit too clever to say that Traffic is the R&B equivalent of the country & western oriented band from Big Pink, but check out the closing song, "Means to an End" and see if this isn't true.

Traffic is also one of the few rock and roll bands that integrates a jazz feeling into its texture, a far more basic level than the addition of wandering solos (which are, in the end, out of place in rock and roll, a strictly structured form). Check all the fills and intros (like in "No Time to Live") for that very ad-lib, spontaneous and relaxed feeling of much jazz playing.

JANN WENNER



Rock and Other Four Letter Words, by J. Marks and Shipen Lebzelter (Columbia MS 7193)
What garbage!



Lucille, B. B. King (BluesWay 6016).

While I don't like to say it, this is the least interesting King album in quite a while. Mind you, it's not really *bad* and in fact would be more than a respectable effort by anyone of lesser abilities than King's. The thing is, though, B.B.'s at the level where his only realistic competition is himself—that is, his earlier

recordings. Stacked up against the best of those, this set just doesn't measure up.

Five performances—"Lucille," "Country Girl," "No Money No Luck," "I Need Your Love" and "Watch Yourself"—have B.B. backed by a Los Angeles group made up of tenor saxophonist Bobby Forte, pianist Lloyd Glenn, organist Maxwell Davis, second guitarist Irving Ashby, bassist David Allen and drummer Jesse Sailes. To this basic unit (minus Forte) was added a horn section of saxophonists Cecil and Bob McNeely, trumpeter Mel Moore and trombonist John Ewing for the remaining titles, "Rainin' All the Time," "You Move Me So," "I'm With You" and "Stop Putting the Hurt on Me." With the exception of the egregious attempt at imitating Ray Charles (replete with a chick vocal group) on "You Move Me So," the performances with the larger group are by all odds the most successful things on the album.

The horns—and Maxwell Davis' simple, functional arrangements (probably just "heads" put together during the session)—add quite a bit of excitement to the performance, chiefly by allowing B.B. to build to effective climaxes much more easily (that is, with the band helping him). Moreover, the horns give these pieces contrast and variety by setting King's basically monochromatic vocal lines against shifting, differently colored harmonic backdrops.

The curious thing is that B.B. sings a hell of a lot better against the bigger group than he does when he's supported by the smaller one. I don't know if he was having a rough time with his voice when he recorded the five pieces with the sextet, but his singing on the date with the nine pieces is vastly more satisfying. On these he seems much more relaxed, assured, more into the singing (probably because he's less conscious of the effort involved) than he does on the first five.

On the small-group performances one is more acutely conscious of B.B.'s deliberate manipulation of the vocal lines. It's as though B.B., sensing the lack of any real interest or excitement in the instrumental support he is being furnished, has decided to lead interest to the performances by working harder at vocal effects, at "emoting" in his singing of the lyrics. Most of the time, however, this results in a singing style that is more mannered and exaggerated than dramatically effective (and for examples of this at its least effective, listen to the second half of "Country Girl" or to "I Need Your Love").

King's a lot more into it on "Rainin' All the Time," "I'm With You" and "Stop Putting the Hurt on Me," all of which are consistently fine performances in just about every respect; he also gets it on in "No Money No Luck" and "Watch Yourself." The only thing that mars the first of these, aside from Sailes' heavy handed drumming, is the busy-ness that occurs as a result of saxophonist Forte's playing fills at the pauses in B.B.'s singing (between phrases and at the end of lines); the tenor lines tend to cancel out the guitar fills that B.B. is providing at exactly these same spots. It just muddies things up, but Forte continues it throughout the performance.

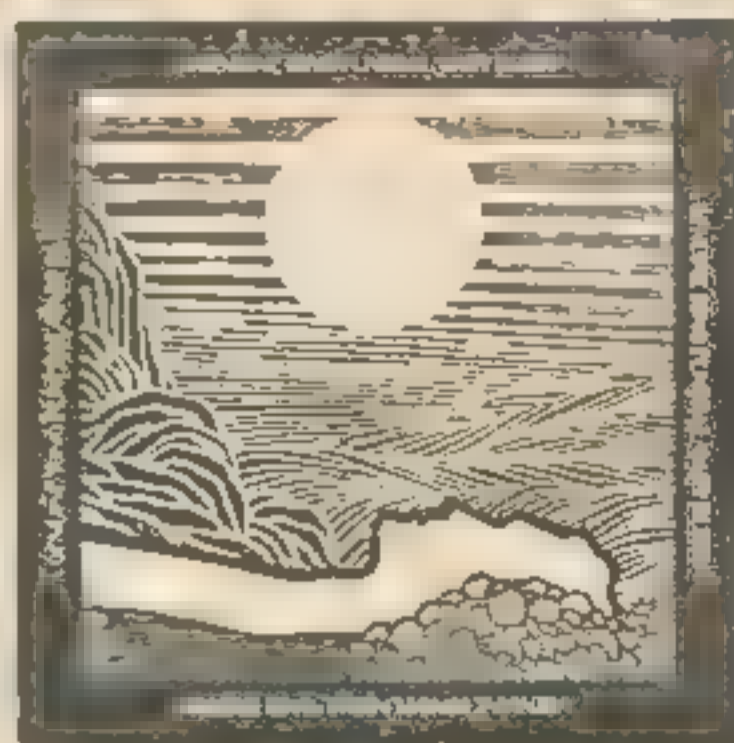
Sailes' unimaginative drumming, as mentioned, proves virtually deadening throughout. He seems content to merely pound out two and four, and does little in the way of shading, accenting, providing explosions (and when he does he telegraphs them) or otherwise adding any kind of rhythmic excitement to the music, save perhaps on "Watch Yourself." The overall monotony of his approach to this music leads to a numbing sameness that's most obvious on the small-group tracks and which is merely disguised by the horn work on the large-group performances. Ultimately, it's possibly one of the reasons why B.B. fails to come to galvanic life on the sextet sides.

B.B.'s guitar is featured extensively on the ten-minute title track, an easy, unforced medium-tempo instrumental excursion over which King provides a running account of his love for, and indebtedness to "Lucille." It's a cute idea but simply is done to death here. Annotator Sheldon Harris' attempt to persuade us that this monolog was taped candidly during the session—B.B. unaware that his comments were being recorded, etc.—is fatuous at best, embarrassing at worst. Don't read the liner notes when listening to this cut. You'll choke.

Beautifully recorded, by the way, but

not one of B.B.'s better album efforts. Worthwhile, though, and a must for B.B. freaks.

PETE WELDMING



A Genuine Tong Funeral, composed by Carla Bley, performed by The Gary Burton Quartet with Orchestra (RCA LSP-3988)

Nothing can happen more beautiful than death.

WALT WHITMAN

Several things about this album are going to scare people away. For one thing, the subtitle is "A Dark Opera Without Words," and who needs opera? For another, it ain't rock, it's jazz; and it doesn't groove, they keep shifting around the meter. And grimmest of all, it's about death.

In the liner notes the composer, Carla Bley, calls *A Genuine Tong Funeral* a "dramatic musical production based upon emotions towards death—from the most unrelenting to those of the deepest loss."

Tiresome as it may be to catalog the faults of our society, the reality of contemporary experience is that we deny death. We are Americans: we are vital, fertile, young, we make it. It is bright and sunny here and we are God's immortal children. Only rarely do we actually stare the fellow in the bright nightgown (as W. C. Fields referred to death) in the eye—one of the Kennedy's gets his brains blown out—and we are shocked, as a people, beyond all logic.

And Mrs. Bley and Gary Burton have the audacity to hurt in our faces a work which reminds us that the business of life is dying! It works beautifully; and is as perfectly realized a composition/performance of new jazz as we are ever likely to receive, fully comparable, in its way, with *Music From Big Pink*.

There is as promised, no singing in this opera-funeral. But each of the horn players—especially tenor saxophonist Gato Barbieri, who is prominently featured—achieves a vocal quality and intensity in solo and ensemble. The effect often is of a wildly impassioned meeting of instrumental voices, barely able to contain their grief, their sorrow. With the titles of various passages (like "Grave Train" and "Death Rolls" and "Mother of the Dead Man") and the album cover (the silhouette of a man lying in state against a timeless sky) to spur your imagination, the music crystallizes into cinematic montages within the theater of your mind: a whole procession of horses—drawn wagons, rosy-cheeked dead men in caskets against walls of floral displays, steamy roomful of mourners in black, impossibly pompous brass bands wailing insane dirges, skeletons swaying on distant horizons.

Funeral starts with "The End (Prologue)" and somber chords from the amassed horns (a rich blend of soprano sax, tenor sax, trumpet, bass trombone and tuba) with Mrs. Bley at the organ, and Burton's vibes-guitar-bass-drum quartet laying down the foundation. Everything Burton plays on this record is just right, unimprovable, as his very first skittery volley of notes in the opening passages illustrates.

A recurrent motif is the interlocked bass-tuba-and-kettle-drum bottom, which sounds exactly like a great, goofy drum corps trying to take a sad song and make it better. Carla Bley is masterful at devices like this, but also more importantly, at creating a musical atmosphere where solos are not so much individual improvisations as statements which (a) emerge from the fabric of the composition and (b) collectively forward its progress. Her melodies are varied, supple, memorable, but it is the grand design on her *Funeral* that is truly awesome.

In her brief liner notes, Mrs. Bley (wife of avant garde jazz pianist-composer Paul Bley, and a gifted composer in her own right) tells us that *A Genuine Tong Funeral* has nothing to do

with Oriental music, except for the inherent underlying dramatic quality. And it is truly uncanny the way one movement grows into the next, the momentum she creates within *Funeral*, almost like—well, something akin to the approach of death itself, inexorable, inevitable, and joyous, in an odd way.

There are no weak moments, so maybe the best thing is to describe the peaks. There is the marvelous interplay of Barbieri's tenor, against Mike Mantler's trumpet, against Jimmy Knepper's trombone, on "Morning of a Death," a frightening, evil diffusion. "Lament": Burton's brisk, flowing, lovely vibes, his melodic slant suggesting an awful sorrow just beneath the superficial jauntiness. Barbieri's singing, granular tone on "Silent Spring," with Burton deftly floating clouds of notes toward the dark horns, and guitarist Larry Coryell's feed-back building to a human moan. Burton's amazing bent-note ballad-like playing on "Mother of the Dead Man," soft, delicate—but jarring, because, as everybody knows, you can't make *vibes* bend notes. The gassy entry of the horns on "Some Dirge," like an exceedingly spooky bullring overture, coupled with something from *The Phantom of the Opera*, almost burlesque but so ominous it seems almost to assume physical dimension.

Throughout, Coryell and Burton weave behind, around and in front of each other and everybody else; all those incandescent country-jazz-rock-blues figures they seem to invent spontaneously. It is sad to know that this is their last recording together, at least for the time being, since Coryell has departed the Burton quartet to establish his own group. An indication that Coryell will probably do alright on his own is contained in the furious, mad-house solo he gets off during "The New National Anthem" (only to be swallowed up by a final screaming swirl of horns and vibes and percussion and organ that very nearly reaches critical mass nuclear explosion intensity).

Funeral is just an overwhelming 45 minutes of music, and when it is ended, its essence lingers like the cosmic bit of wisdom from someone named Paul Haines which is discreetly reprinted on the back of the jacket liner: "Only the survivors are dead." JOHN BURKS



Rhinoceros (Elektra EKS-74030).

Early this fall, word leaked out from California that the next big West Coast group was going to be a band called Rhinoceros. Their first album has just been released and it leaves the unmistakable impression of a good album that could have been a lot better.

Rhinoceros is a seven man hornless creature full of all kinds of good people. Guitarist Danny Weiss was the original lead for the Iron Butterfly. Doug Hastings played guitar with Buffalo Springfield. Organist Mike Fonfara played on the Electric Flag album and drummer Billy Mundi is, of all things, an ex-Mother.

The personnel of the group is first class, but the band hasn't utilized its members to their fullest extent on this album. The group is tight and together, but a curious lack of spontaneity pervades a good deal of the album.

Solos, especially Weiss's guitar are generally excellent, but short and infrequent. Thus, some songs appear to be too tightly structured. A perfect example is "Apricot Brandy," the only instrumental on the album. The song is good as far as it goes, but lasts less than two minutes which hardly allows for the development of musical ideas. This is quite a shame, because Rhinoceros has too many good musicians to put out an instrumental virtually devoid of improvisations.

Songs on the album range from the insipid "You're My Girl" to the superb "That Time of the Year." The latter is a lovely, wistful piece by Rhinoceros Alan Gerber. Piano, organ and guitar glide in and out of a dominant position beautifully and unobtrusively creating a rich texture. John Finley's vocal here is the best on the album, due in part to the fact that he sings the whole song alone, thus avoiding some of the pathetic attempts at harmony that mar other cuts.

One failing of the group is its occasional inability to maintain a mood throughout a song. "Along Comes Tomorrow," for example, begins as a very pretty song with some exquisite, crystal clear guitar work. Gradually the volume mounts until we are left with Gerber and Finley trying to shout each other on the chorus, ruining the song's unity.

On this album, Rhinoceros comes across as a talented, unpretentious group, reminiscent in some ways of the late, great Buffalo Springfield. Tastefulness and restraint (sometimes too much restraint) mark most songs in contrast to most new groups. Yet, the album doesn't quite make it. The songs are simply not that good and the group never breaks loose into improvised instrumentals. Rhinoceros has two guitars, drums, organ piano and bass, but fails to use this rich instrumentation as imaginatively as it should.

There are four or five fine cuts on this album with the rest either drecks or mediocrities. This is by no means an outstanding album, but Rhinoceros is still a very new group and shows potential that could lead to a much better second album. At any rate, whether or not you like the album, you've got to love the rhinoceros on the cover.

PETER APPLEBOME



The Turtles' last single, "Elenore," is one of these tight, really together songs that from time to time drifts across the AM airwaves. The arrangement is perfect, from the piano playing and bongos to the vocal; even the lyrics are unassuming: "you're my pride and joy etcetera. . . ." It's the kind of record that can take its place next to "Happy Together" and "You Baby," for if nothing else the Turtles have occasionally been able to make some quite good singles.

Unfortunately the best thing about the new Turtles' album is "Elenore." It's not that *Battle of the Bands* is embarrassing bad, because it isn't; rather it's that *Battle of the Bands* is something of a bore. Presumably most (if not all) of the tracks are parodies of one sort or another: thus "Buzzsaw" entered in the "battle" by the "Fabulous Dawgs" and "Surfer Dan" (by the "Cross Fires"). Yet neither "Buzzsaw" nor "Surfer Dan" is particularly funny, and neither has any real musical merit apart from its existence as parody. The same criticism might be made of "The Last Thing I Remember" (by the "Atomic Enchilada").

Nowhere in this album is there any evidence of the genius for parody that Frank Zappa and Ed Sanders both possess; the album more often than not lacks subtlety and the incisive insight into form that makes parody successful. Perhaps this is an unfair comparison, since obviously the Turtles are not doing what the Mothers or Fugs are doing—but then what the Turtles are doing is highly problematical.

As for the rest of the album, "Oh, Daddy!" (by the "L.A. Bust '66") and "Chicken Little Was Right" (by "Fats Mallard and the Bluegrass Fireball") are both tolerable, while "Food" (by the "Big Brothers") is too aggressively cute to be listened to often. "You Showed Me" (by "Nature's Children") is a very pleasant McGuinn-Gene Clark composition and is the album's best track apart from

"Elenore." "Earth Anthem" (by "All") on the other hand sounds as banal as its title; it even sports a French horn ("this is our home, third from the sun . . ."). All things considered, *Battle of the Bands* is an unimpressive collection of largely mediocre parodies, and in this case the exceptions ("You Showed Me" and "Elenore") certainly prove the rule. JIM MILLER



Mad River (Capitol ST 2985)

A sad story here. A bunch of guys get together to pick and sing at a college in the Midwest. Country blues, old-timey stuff (one guy used to back up Doc Watson), jug band, late at night old rock and roll favorites, C-A minor-F-G.

One day they decide to go electric—yes, virtually overnight. One day on a trip to Dayton they cross a tributary of the Miami River. "Hey, how about The Mad River Blues Band?" Night after night of practice, shunted from one place to another because they're so loud, incredible hassles between Lawrence and David, both excellent guitarists, about who's in charge, eventually getting the group dynamics straightened out, and, finally, the music.

A very good, albeit green, pre-Clapton blues band. Expand the horizons. Try to get on the WING Battle of the Bands—no go—they look too funny. No local gigs unless you play "Hang On, Sloopy." No compromise with provincials—off to the West Coast.

Dewey, the drummer, is from town. His brother brings back reports from visits and letters—starving, about to break up, turned down at audition at the Fillmore, local gigs in Berkeley, third billing at Avalon, gathering following in Berkeley, do a 7-inch LP a la Country Joe—not very good at all: "We got screwed," fire old manager, offers from every record company in the country, rumors of a huge contract with Capitol. Silence.

And now, an album. An attempt at multi-rhythmic, polytonal, intellectual college-trained Rock As Art. A noble effort, no doubt, but it's still an example of the too-much-too-soon syndrome. Not a trace of the roots from which they sprang. Not included is their fine 1957 rock parody "Divide and Conquer (That's What She Said to Me)." Just a lot of very derivative, extremely structureless, poorly engineered, very disheartening trivia. And the tragedy is, guys, that you probably will never have a second chance. EDMUND O. WARD



Saloom, Sinclair and the Mother Bear, (Cadet Concept LPS 316).

The Mother Bear is lead guitar, bass, drums and organ. Nothing startlingly unusual. Nor will a first listening of the record produce that sensation. But after a couple of listenings, a few things become apparent. One is that Roger Saloom is definitely worth listening to. Two is that the group, in toto, is capable. And three is that the two longest cuts are the best ones.

"Florida Blues" demonstrates what is right with the band and "Marie La Peau" shows what's right with Saloom and Sinclair.

"Florida Blues" is a long instrumental sandwiched between two highly informative but not terribly musical vocal talks by Roger Saloom a la Guthrie (either one, more likely Arlo). No need to try your patience by explaining the story. But in between, Tom Davis, the lead, Phil Montgomery, the drummer, and Dick Orvis, the organist, show what accomplished musicians they are.

The band hails from in and around Bloomington, Indiana. Most of them have been in other groups and they've spent time in some or all of those cities skirting the south shore of the Great Lakes called the Blues Belt, listening to and playing with black groups.

The last thing they sound like is black. But they sound like they know their blues, can use it, and most of all sound fluent.

The song "Marie La Peau" is almost worth the price of the album. It, too, has a talking blues format by Saloom, but is really worth listening to. The overall sound is electric jugband and it's really good-time music. "Marie La Peau" shows Roger Saloom as a superb story teller with a good sense of rhythm and a great sense of timing, and the music is incredibly infectious.

Side one of the album occasionally shows the results of a lyricist out of hand. When Sam Goldwyn said, "If you want a message, go Western Union," he was speaking of the movies, but this dictum could also be applied to rock lyrics.

This is not to say that Saloom's lyrics are pretentious in the tradition of Eric Burdon or Jim Morrison, but when he begins to take himself seriously he runs a great risk of sounding silly. The worst offender is a song called "Conversations with Gentility."

"Steals" is a cut that shows off Robin Sinclair's voice at its best. It is a hard belting cut, a bit Dylan-esque, with the voices totally in control. The lyrics do not intrude.

The following cut, "Griffin," is just as hard, but more toward rock. Robin's voice has power, and while it comes across on this song, she really comes across better in person. "Griffin" tends to stumble into some rather fatuous philosophizing. Nonetheless, it has impressed the people at Chess (who run Cadet Concept) enough to talk of releasing it as a single.

The last one on side one is cryptically entitled "She Kicked Me Out of the House After This One." It has some fine electronics and a sound reminiscent of the Airplane at its most driving, but with a heavy organ sound. Save for the words, it would be great. As it is, it's merely very good.

All in all, the band displays its roots in blues and Dylanesque folk-rock quite prominently. Perhaps too much so. At times it doesn't add up to a musical whole; they are somehow sketchy. They have a distinctive texture because of a heavy dependence on the organ for their root sound—more so than any group that comes to mind.

While they are neither new nor different—as they occasionally try (too hard) to be—they are good, and they are evolving a style of their own. This isn't the last you'll hear of them. ALEC DUBRO

Cop on Campus

o'rielly's picture's on page 1 swinging his billyclub in highschool we called him 'crazy o'rielly' cause he punched walls with his bare fists once in a football game he gouged someone's face with a beer can opener (hidden under his uniform) and was kicked off the team o'rielly's picture's on page 1 of the DAILY NEWS busting up smartass collegelids: bloodcheers for headlines to paste in o'rielly's scrapbook now that he's back on the team

—Gerald Joth

BY RICHARD BRAUTIGAN

I waited until April, and then one morning on my way to school: BANG! my first sub., right in front of a grocery



And then there was the sky. I ventured forth into the sky, seeking the enemy there, while Mount Rainier tow-

I also used to play airplane in the house, too, by taking four chairs from the kitchen and putting them together: two chairs facing the same way for the fuselage and a chair for each wing.

Your Hat
 Gone Now These
 Twenty Years
 January 1,
 1965

BY RICHARD BRAUTIGAN

I've been examining half-scrap of my childhood. They are pieces of distant life that have no form or meaning. They are things that just happened like lint.

—Continued from Page 8

The nominations were read in Academy Awards style with a Laugh-style, L.A. disc jockey named Garry Owens doing an incredibly hammy and funny real-life imitation of the Academy Awards presentations. I don't know anything about the awards for most of the winners (Promotion Man of the Year,

I don't think there will ever be a Bill Gavin Conference in Las Vegas that has as much meaning to the record indus-

try as this one. If you put two and two together from the speeches of Joe Smith and Irwin Steinberg, it becomes clear that the radio industry is increasingly irrelevant, both in creative and financial respects. The convulsion of rock and roll, long apparent to the audience and apparent to the active and hip companies two years ago, has finally hit the radio industry and the rest of the record com-

And that's where Las Vegas is at.



→Lester Chambers

—Willie Chambers


Ask the Chambers Brothers. Ask the current critics. Ask the audiences who have seen them in New York at such spots as Cafe Au Go Go, The Bitter End, The Scene, at The Electric Factory in Philadelphia, The Unicorn in Boston. Or ask the man who already owns one:



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Melanie

February 3rd, 1947
New York
7:35 a.m.

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MERCURY — Aquarius 14
VENUS — Sagittarius 16
MARS — Aquarius 10
JUPITER — Virgo 22
SATURN — Leo 6
URANUS — Gemini 23
NEPTUNE — Libra 10
PLUTO — Leo 15
RISING SIGN — Aquarius 26

This is the Aquarian Age. You like to work out your own problems and come to your own conclusions. You seldom stay licked.
You face reality when you have to, but you prefer to live in a world of your own where beauty and sympathy are natural and normal.
You always will be surrounded by people who are different and unusual and creative.
Personal freedom is the breath of life to you.
Many great inventors and writers were born when the planet Mercury was transiting the sign of Aquarius.
You can't help being attracted to attractive people.
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